

A Home of Their Own – Chapter 1

The United States Air Force replaced this:

1,875 mph (Mach 2.5-plus).
4 AIM-9L/M Sidewinder on the underwing stations and
4 AIM-7F/M Sparrow missiles conformal fuel tank
up to 8 AIM-120 AMRAAM missiles
12 CBU-52 (6 with wing tanks)
12 CBU-59 (6 with wing tanks)
12 CBU-71 (6 with wing tanks)
12 CBU-87 (6 with wing tanks)
12 CBU-89 (6 with wing tanks)
20 MK-20 (6 with wing tanks)
1 20mm Gatling gun
Cost \$43 million

With this:

Mach 1.8 (super cruise: Mach 1.5)
2 AIM-9 Sidewinders
6 AIM-120C AMRAAM missiles
2 1,000-pound JDAMs
1 20mm Gatling gun
Cost \$256.9 million

I hope that they're 6 times harder to shoot down!

It goes slower, carries a smaller load and costs 6 times as much. The advantages are maneuverability and stealth. The disadvantages are too numerous to list. Given a choice between the F-22 and the F-23, I preferred the F-23, solely based on looks. In April 1992, during flight-testing after contract award, the first YF-22A prototype crashed while landing at Edwards Air Force Base in California. The Air Force originally planned to order 750 ATFs, with production beginning in 1994. The 1990 Major Aircraft Review altered the plan to 648 aircraft beginning in 1996. The goal changed again in 1994, when it became 442 planes entering service in 2003 or 2004. A 1997 DOD report put the purchase at 339. In 2003, the Air Force said that the existing congressional cost cap limited the purchase to 277. In 2005, the Pentagon was saying it would buy 180 aircraft, which would save \$15 billion but raise the cost of each plane. The first production F-22 crash occurred at Nellis AFB on December 20, 2004, during takeoff. The pilot ejected safely moments before impact.

A flight control system problem caused an F-22 Raptor to crash on the runway at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., on Dec. 20 2004, according to an Air Force report. The pilot ejected and sustained minor injuries. The \$133.3-million aircraft, assigned to the 422nd Test and Evaluation Squadron at Nellis, was destroyed when it crashed. Additional

damage was limited to an arresting cable, runway guide sign, runway light and the runway itself.

The flight control system malfunction was caused by a brief power interruption to the aircraft's three rate sensor assemblies, which caused them to fail. The assemblies measure angular acceleration in all three axes: pitch, roll and yaw. With three failed assemblies, the F-22 is not able to fly, investigators said.

When the pilot shut down engines for maintenance servicing, he left the auxiliary power unit running. Based on technical order guidance, he believed the power unit would supply continuous power to the flight control system. However, there was a less-than-one second power interruption to the assemblies during engine shutdown.

There is no automatic warning of this condition. To discover it, the pilot would have had performed a diagnostic test. The pilot accomplished a successful test before engine shutdown, and because the power unit was on, he believed a second test was unnecessary. (Courtesy of Air Combat Command News Service)

Maximum speed is estimated to be Mach 1.72 in supercruise mode; with afterburners, "greater than Mach 2.0" (2,120 km/h), according to Lockheed Martin. The Raptor can easily exceed its design speed limits, particularly at low altitudes; max-speed alerts help prevent the pilot from exceeding the limits. Gen. John P. Jumper, US Air Force Chief of Staff, flew the Raptor faster than 1.7 Mach without afterburners on January 13, 2005. The absence of variable intake ramps may make speeds greater than Mach 2.0 unreachable, but there is no solid evidence for this. Such ramps would be used to prevent engine "flame-out", which is caused when too much air extinguishes the engine's "pilot light", but the intake itself may be designed to prevent such flame-outs. Former Lockheed Raptor chief test pilot Paul Metz says the Raptor has a fixed inlet.

Meanwhile the United States Navy went to this:

F/A-18E/F

Mach 1.6

Same weapons load as the F/A-18 + 2 additional external stations

Cost \$60 million

From this:

F-14

Mach 1.8

Only plane to carry Phoenix missile

Cost \$38 million

Oh yeah, they're improving things to death.

And on the drawing boards is the F-35 JSF. The stealthy F-35 is a supersonic, multi-role, fifth generation fighter designed to replace aging AV-8B Harriers, A-10s, F-16s, F/A-18 Hornets and United Kingdom Harrier GR-7s and Sea Harriers. The first JSF test aircraft, a conventional takeoff and landing (CTOL) F-35A, is scheduled to make its inaugural flight in the third quarter of 2006. Component-level assembly is under way for the short-takeoff/vertical landing (STOVL) F-35B, which will be the second aircraft to enter flight-testing. Not only are we building the 'most-advanced' 5th generation fighter in the world, we're selling it to everyone who wants to buy one. It is supposed to go Mach 1.8.

It should be noted on this claim that Janes Defence weekly recently (in 2005) put the value of an F-22 at \$151 million dollars US, rising to \$200 million if upgrades to approach the F-35's air to ground targeting performance were included. At a projected price of \$45 million US (2003 dollars), the F-35 is three to four times cheaper than the F-22. Therefore, there would have to be a very significant cost blowout in the F-35 program for the F-22 to become better value for the money. What also needs to be considered, is that the F-22 has an even smaller internal weapons capacity to the F-35A, with 2 x 1000lb weapons versus the F-35A's 2 x 2000lb'ers. In addition to this, no plans have been announced in the US to integrate the wide range of weapons available on the F-35 onto the F-22, meaning Australia would have to assume the cost and technological risk of doing so.

Also, the claims made by Australian observer Carlo Kopp that supercruise will dramatically increase the sortie rate of the F-22 fail to consider the fact that higher speed is only one variable impacting on sortie rate. Maintainability (a particular emphasis in the newer F-35 design), the time needed to re-arm and refuel, loiter time over the combat area and the need to brief and rest crew are other important variables. Additionally where external stores are carried (which will probably be the vast majority of air to ground missions), the F-22 will not be able to supercruise for at least half the mission. Finally, at least one retired US Air Force officer has claimed that the supercruise feature is over-rated as a means of traversing long distances at high speed, as flying at supersonic speed without using afterburners still does not allow for optimal fuel consumption, hence range.

Other histories can serve as well – The utterly inadequate and overrun B-1B; the unbelievably expensive, overrun B-2; the cancelled DIVADS gun system; the cancelled Crusader mobile heavy artillery for the Army; a stealthy A-12 strike aircraft for the USN, cancelled for lack of progress and escalating costs; the dangerous and operationally disappointing Marine AV-8B; and currently, the exorbitantly expensive, ill conceived, flawed V-22 Osprey. I read the report; this guy is on their side. He's a retired USAF Colonel and no doubt believes what he says. He's probably correct, but citing LA Times Reporters isn't going to win him any friends. The F-35 price is currently ~\$133 million and the software won't be ready until 2016.

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As far as I'm concerned, it isn't about hardware anyway. An F-104 can take an F-22; he more or less says so. Always liked the F-104. Anyway, it's about the training. We have Fighters Weapons School, they don't. I wanted to say something about us fighting for freedom and the flag, but they might be too. Maybe it's all in the mindset... I love to tell you an airplane story. But all I know about airplanes is what goes up, must come down. If they come down when they're intended to, it isn't a problem. Otherwise... (All times are EDT) as reported by CNN:

8:45 am: A hijacked passenger jet, American Airlines Flight 11 out of Boston, Massachusetts, crashes into the north tower of the World Trade Center, tearing a gaping hole in the building and setting it afire.

9:03 am: A second hijacked airliner, United Airlines Flight 175 from Boston, crashes into the south tower of the World Trade Center and explodes. Both buildings are burning.

9:17 am: The Federal Aviation Administration shuts down all New York City area airports.

9:21 am: The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey orders all bridges and tunnels in the New York area closed.

Jon Jones turned on the TV to catch the news before work. It was 6:30am in Los Angeles and Bush had just completed his statement. He had a few minute before he had to leave, he didn't start until 8 and it was only a 20-minute drive to LAX. He wanted to eat his muffin and drink his coffee before he left. He sat there with the muffin halfway to his mouth while he watched. They were rerunning the first two plane crashes. Speculation was rampant at this point, no one was certain of anything. Fox was late getting it on the air and he switched back to CNN. The following time is unclear, it probably in minutes and seconds, but note the apparent difference the time of the tower collapses:

00:17 AAF11 hits north tower.

01:09 CNN Breaking news.

03:09 Fox News alert.

04:24 Bush's motorcade arrives at Booker Elementary.

06:20 Bush enters classroom.

07:53 U175 hits south tower.

09:54 Andrew Card tells Bush "America is under attack".

14:57 Reading lesson ends.

18:54 Bush's speech at Booker continues on schedule.

20:07 Bush's speech ends.

22:05 U93 "...there is a bomb on board..."

24:44 CNN Breaking News: Pentagon.

33:26 South tower collapses. (10:05am)

40:17 NYFD in base of N. Tower unaware S. Tower collapsed.

43:06 North tower collapses. (10:28am)

9:30 am: President Bush, speaking in Sarasota, Florida, says the country has suffered an “apparent terrorist attack.”

9:40 am: The FAA halts all flight operations at US airports, the first time in US history that air traffic nationwide has been halted.

9:43 am: American Airlines Flight 77 crashes into the Pentagon, sending up a huge plume of smoke. Evacuation begins immediately.

9:45 am: The White House evacuates.

9:57 am: Bush departs from Florida.

10:05 am: The south tower of the World Trade Center collapses, plummeting into the streets below. A massive cloud of dust and debris forms and slowly drifts away from the building.

10:08 am: Secret Service agents armed with automatic rifles are deployed into Lafayette Park across from the White House.

10:10 am: A portion of the Pentagon collapses.

10:10 am: United Airlines Flight 93, also hijacked, crashes in Somerset County, Pennsylvania, southeast of Pittsburgh.

10:13 am: The United Nations building evacuates, including 4,700 people from the headquarters building and 7,000 total from UNICEF and UN development programs.

10:22 am: In Washington, the State and Justice Departments are evacuated, along with the World Bank.

10:24 am: The FAA reports that all inbound transatlantic aircraft flying into the United States are being diverted to Canada.

10:28 am: The World Trade Center’s north tower collapses from the top down as if it were being peeled apart, releasing a tremendous cloud of debris and smoke.

10:45 am: All federal office buildings in Washington are evacuated.

10:46 am: US Secretary of State Colin Powell cuts short his trip to Latin America to return to the United States.

10:48 am: Police confirm the plane crash in Pennsylvania.

10:53 am: New York’s primary elections, scheduled for Tuesday, are postponed.

10:54 am: Israel evacuates all diplomatic missions.

10:57 am: New York Governor George Pataki says all state government offices are closed.

11:02 am: New York City Mayor Rudolph Giuliani urges New Yorkers to stay at home and orders an evacuation of the area south of Canal Street.

11:16 am: CNN reports that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is preparing emergency-response teams in a precautionary move.

11:18 am: American Airlines reports it has lost two aircraft. American Flight 11, a Boeing 767 flying from Boston to Los Angeles, had 81 passengers and 11 crew aboard. Flight 77, a Boeing 757 en route from Washington's Dulles International Airport to Los Angeles, had 58 passengers and six crew members aboard. Flight 11 slammed into the north tower of the World Trade Center. Flight 77 hit the Pentagon.

11:26 am: United Airlines reports that United Flight 93, en route from Newark, New Jersey, to San Francisco, California, has crashed in Pennsylvania. The airline also says that it is "deeply concerned" about United Flight 175.

11:59 am: United Airlines confirms that Flight 175, from Boston to Los Angeles, has crashed with 56 passengers and nine crewmembers aboard. It hit the World Trade Center's south tower.

Jon had stayed well past the time he was supposed to be at work at LAX. His phone rang and the first question out of his boss's mouth was, "Where the hell are you?"

"Sorry Dave I was watching TV and lost track of the time."

"They're evacuating the airport, maybe you'd just better stay home. We had 3 flights inbound that were involved in those attacks. You can keep track of what's going down and if I need to, I'll call you. Stay off your phone."

12:04 pm: Los Angeles International Airport, the destination of three of the crashed airplanes, is evacuated.

12:15 pm: San Francisco International Airport is evacuated and shut down. The airport was the destination of United Airlines Flight 93, which crashed in Pennsylvania.

12:15 pm: The Immigration and Naturalization Service says US borders with Canada and Mexico are on the highest state of alert, but no decision has been made about closing borders.

12:30 pm: The FAA says 50 flights are in US airspace, but none are reporting any problems.

1:04 pm: Bush, speaking from Barksdale Air Force Base in Louisiana, says that all appropriate security measures are being taken, including putting the US military on high alert worldwide. He asks for prayers for those killed or wounded in the attacks and says, "Make no mistake, the United States will hunt down and punish those responsible for these cowardly acts."

1:27 pm: A state of emergency is declared by the city of Washington.

1:44 pm: The Pentagon says five warships and two aircraft carriers will leave the US Naval Station in Norfolk, Virginia, to protect the East Coast from further attack and to reduce the number of ships in port. The two carriers, the USS George Washington and the USS John F. Kennedy, are headed for the New York coast. The other ships headed to sea are frigates and guided missile destroyers capable of shooting down aircraft.

1:48 pm: Bush leaves Barksdale Air Force Base aboard Air Force One and flies to an Air Force base in Nebraska.

2 pm: Senior FBI sources tell CNN they are working on the assumption that the four airplanes that crashed were hijacked as part of a terrorist attack.

2:30 pm: The FAA announces there will be no US commercial air traffic until noon EDT Wednesday at the earliest.

A Home of Their Own – Chapter 2

“Dave, they just said on TV that there would be no commercial air traffic until Wednesday.”

“Thanks for the heads up, anything new?”

“All the planes headed here hit one or the other of the buildings. The flight to San Francisco crashed in Pennsylvania.”

“We heard that SFO was evacuated and closed. See you Wednesday, unless you hear otherwise.”

Jon was on his third pot of coffee and only left the TV to get another cup, make more or make room for more. They wouldn't need baggage handlers on this day and possibly not the next. As it turned out, North American air space was closed for several days after the attacks and air travel decreased significantly upon its reopening. By 12:15 EDT, all of the 4,500 planes in the air were on the ground. Air traffic was suspended for 3 days over the US and Canada. When it resumed, a whole lot had changed and many people, including Jon lost their jobs.

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2:49 pm: At a news conference, Giuliani says that subway and bus service are partially restored in New York City. Asked about the number of people killed, Giuliani says, “I don't think we want to speculate about that – more than any of us can bear.”

3:55 pm: Karen Hughes, a White House counselor, says the President is at an undisclosed location, later revealed to be Offutt Air Force Base in Nebraska, and is conducting a National Security Council meeting by phone. Vice President Dick Cheney and National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice are in a secure facility at the White House. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld is at the Pentagon.

3:55 pm: Giuliani now says the number of critically injured in New York City is up to 200 with 2,100 total injuries reported.

4 pm: CNN National Security Correspondent David Ensor reports that US officials say there are “good indications” that Saudi militant Osama bin Laden, suspected of coordinating the bombings of two US embassies in 1998, is involved in the attacks, based on “new and specific” information developed since the attacks.

4:06 pm: California Governor Gray Davis dispatches urban search-and-rescue teams to New York.

4:10 pm: Building 7 of the World Trade Center complex is reported on fire.

4:20 pm: US Sen. Bob Graham, D-Florida, chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, says he was “not surprised there was an attack (but) was surprised at the specificity.” He says he was “shocked at what actually happened – the extent of it.”

4:25 pm: The American Stock Exchange, the NASDAQ and the New York Stock Exchange say they will remain closed Wednesday.

4:30 pm: The President leaves Offutt Air Force Base in Nebraska aboard Air Force One to return to Washington.

5:15 pm: CNN Military Affairs Correspondent Jamie McIntyre reports fires are still burning in part of the Pentagon. No death figures have been released yet.

5:20 pm: The 47-story Building 7 of the World Trade Center complex collapses. The evacuated building is damaged when the twin towers across the street collapse earlier in the day. Other nearby buildings in the area remained ablaze.

5:30 pm: CNN Senior White House Correspondent John King reports that US officials say the plane that crashed in Pennsylvania could have been headed for one of three possible targets: Camp David, the White House or the US Capitol building.

6 pm: Explosions are heard in Kabul, Afghanistan, hours after terrorist attacks targeted financial and military centers in the United States. The attacks occurred at 2:30 am local time. Afghanistan is believed to be where bin Laden, who US officials say is possibly behind Tuesday’s deadly attacks, is located. US officials say later that the United States had no involvement in the incident whatsoever. The attack is credited to the Northern Alliance, a group fighting the Taliban in the country’s ongoing civil war.

6:10 pm: Giuliani urges New Yorkers to stay home Wednesday if they can.

6:40 pm: Rumsfeld, the US defense secretary, holds a news conference in the Pentagon, noting the building is operational. “It will be in business tomorrow,” he says.

6:54 pm: Bush arrives back at the White House aboard Marine One and is scheduled to address the nation at 8:30 pm. The President earlier landed at Andrews Air Force Base in Maryland with a three-fighter jet escort. CNN’s John King reports Laura Bush arrived earlier by motorcade from a “secure location.”

7:17 pm: US Attorney General John Ashcroft says the FBI is setting up a Web site for tips on the attacks: www.ifccfbi.gov. He also says family and friends of possible victims can leave contact information at 800-331-0075.

7:02 pm: CNN’s Paula Zahn reports the Marriott Hotel near the World Trade Center is on the verge of collapse and says some New York bridges are now open to outbound traffic.

7:45 pm: The New York Police Department says that at least 78 officers are missing. The city also says that as many as half of the first 400 firefighters on the scene were killed.

8:30 pm: President Bush addresses the nation, saying, “Thousands of lives were suddenly ended by evil” and asks for prayers for the families and friends of Tuesday’s victims. “These acts shattered steel, but they cannot dent the steel of American resolve,” he says. The President says the US government will make no distinction between the terrorists who committed the acts and those who harbor them. He adds that government offices in Washington are reopening for essential personnel Tuesday night and for all workers Wednesday.

9:22 pm: CNN’s McIntyre reports the fire at the Pentagon is still burning and is considered contained but not under control.

9:57 pm: Giuliani says New York City schools will be closed Wednesday and no more volunteers are needed for Tuesday evening’s rescue efforts. He says there is hope that there are still people alive in rubble. He also says that power is out on the Westside of Manhattan and that health department tests show there are no airborne chemical agents about which to worry.

10:49 pm: CNN Congressional Correspondent Jonathan Karl reports that Attorney General Ashcroft told members of Congress that there were three to five hijackers on each plane armed only with knives.

10:56 pm: CNN’s Zahn reports that New York City police believe there are people alive in buildings near the World Trade Center.

11:54 pm: CNN Washington Bureau Chief Frank Sesno reports that a government official told him there was an open microphone on one of the hijacked planes and that sounds of discussion and “duress” were heard. Sesno also reports a source says law enforcement has “credible” information and leads and is confident about the investigation.

Remember...

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“Damn I lost a whole day,” Jon thought. “I guess I better eat something besides another muffin.”

The TV dinner wasn’t much of an improvement. Jon was single, 26 years old and out of the Air Force for over 3 years now. He was anticipating his release from the ready reserves and sincerely hoped they wouldn’t find some way to reactivate him. Everyone who enlists in the United States Military, whether it’s for active duty (full time) or Nation-

al Guard/Reserves (part time) incurs a MINIMUM eight-year service obligation. That's right – when you sign on the dotted line, you commit yourself for eight years!

Whatever amount of time is not spent on active duty (which is full-time duty) or spent in the Drilling Guard/Reserves (those who drill one weekend per month, and two weeks per year, and are subject to be called to active duty), is spent in the IRR (Individual Ready Reserves).

In the IRR, individuals are not required to drill, nor do they draw any pay, but their names remain on a list and they can be recalled to active duty at any time, until their total eight-year service obligation is complete. In fact, for the war in Iraq and Afghanistan, the Army has already recalled over 5,000 soldiers in the IRR back to active duty; so far, the Army is the only service who has recalled IRR. That changed, but not before Jon received his discharge.

If things weren't complicated enough, Jon's steady girlfriend since he'd gotten out of the Air Force announced that she was pregnant. Jon immediately proposed. Melody wasn't sure she wanted to get married or keep the baby. Jon asked her to think over the proposal. If she didn't want to get married, fine, she could have the baby and he could raise their child. Jon only believed in abortion in the case of rape or incest and even then, it was the woman's choice. The problem from Melody's viewpoint was that she had gone out with another fellow and been a victim of date rape. She wasn't sure who the father of her baby was. She didn't want to saddle Jon with Jack's baby and she couldn't be sure. Jack laughed at her and told her it was her problem. Melody had to decide and decide quickly.

If Jon had known about Jack, it may have been a different story, at least so far as the proposal went. Rather than keep you in suspense, the baby was Jon's. People often make poor decisions when they don't have all of the facts. Jon assumed correctly that he was the baby's father. Jon was rather insistent and finally Melody agreed to have the baby, but she wasn't sure she wanted to marry Jon. When Jon proposed, he didn't know he was going to be out of work, either. He had some savings and immediately applied for unemployment. It took a while but he found a job working in one of the few remaining guns stores in the LA basin. LA used to be a friendly place for owners of guns stores. Now, most of them were closed, put out of business by the AWB and changing attitudes.

Even a wise man occasionally has trouble making decisions. You're darned if you do and darned if you don't. Example: 1Kings, Chapter 3, vs. 16-28. Solomon understood love, a little too well as it later turned out. Cost him big time.

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May 15, 2002...

"She's beautiful. I'll manage somehow to get her raised properly."

“Oh, Jon, I can’t give her up, is the offer of marriage still open?”

“I think I saw this in an old rerun on TV.”

“Almost. That was Doris Day and Rock Hudson and they got married while she was on the way to the delivery room.”

“Only if you’re sure Melody.”

Both parents AA: Child must be AA

One parent AA and other AO Child can be either AA or AO

Both parents AO Child can be AA, AO, or OO

In each of these scenarios, the child’s phenotype, or Blood Type, would be A, except in the case of both parents donating an O gene, in which case the child’s genotype would be OO and his Blood Type (phenotype) would be O. Also, these parents could not have any offspring that were Type B (genotypes BB or BO) or Type AB (genotype AB) since neither parent has a B gene to donate. The same situation exists if both parents are Type B. Simply substitute B for A in the above pairings. Jon had type A blood and Melody type O. If one parent is Type O, the other parent determines the Blood Type of the offspring. Melody knew that Jack was B negative, he’d made an issue over it. Most of the time, hospitals don’t type a baby’s blood when it’s born, without a reason. They will, if you ask and Melody did. You don’t always need DNA to determine parentage.

When Melody got out of the hospital, they drove to Las Vegas and got married. Melody worked in a law office and was on maternity leave. When they returned from Vegas, Jon moved his few possessions into Melody’s apartment; he was on a month-to-month basis in a bad neighborhood in Torrance. The baby, Angelina Jennifer Jones, weighed 5lb 8oz and was cuter than a bug’s ear.

“Mel, I’m not getting ahead working in a gun store. I heard that there is a position open in San Jose at SJC (Norman Y. Mineta San Jose International Airport), would you be opposed to moving?” (Which state has the most airports? Texas is second at 389.)

“Let me talk to my boss about moving to the San Jose office, Jon.”

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If you’re not familiar with San Francisco and the cost of housing in the area, you may not understand why they chose to live in Morgan Hill. It’s probably an hour commute on most days. Besides, Melody was from Morgan Hill and they had built-in baby sitters, her mother or her sister. Jon was from Nebraska. Morgan Hill is located at the southern end of the Santa Clara Valley, in Santa Clara County. It is approximately 21 miles south of downtown San Jose on US 101 and centrally located approximately 70 miles between

San Francisco and Monterey. City limits extend from the valley floor to the foothills of the Santa Cruz Mountains to the west, and the Mount Hamilton Range to the east.

Jon, Melody and Angelina lived in Acacia Mobile Home Park. Land in Morgan Hill sold for in the range of \$8 - \$15 per ft². A standard lot of 65'x 105' went for from \$55,000 to over \$100,000. The land was about the same price as Palmdale. On the Peninsula, land could go for a whole lot more. Melody's father had died while she was in high school, auto accident. They had a life insurance policy that paid off the balance of their mortgage and left Nancy fairly comfortable. Nancy was 48 and Melody's sister, Joanne, was 24 and single. Nancy didn't work outside of the home and Joanne occasionally would watch Angelina during the evening if Jon and Melody wanted to take in a movie or go out to eat. Jon was outnumbered, 5 to 1 and Melody didn't want another child.

Most people go through an inheritance like a hot knife through butter. Nancy wasn't that way, perhaps more than a little old fashioned. She could spend what she had and end up needing to take a job; or, she could conserve and grow what she had. Paul had signed up for one of those mail-order accident policies that you get the first month for only a dollar or some such nonsense. He was killed the day the policy arrived in the mail and the \$10,000 was enough to pay off the balance on the mortgage. He had a \$40,000 term policy with his employer and a personal policy of \$100,000 with a double indemnity clause. \$240,000 may sound like a lot of money, but invested at 6%, it only produces an annual income of \$14,400.

"How do you make ends meet, Mom?"

"I have my garden, which helps a lot and your uncle Ralph shares beef and pork from the farm. It's not like I eat a lot, you know. Plus there's that pension from your father's employer. It isn't much, but I manage and even save a little. Did I miss something or did Jon and you go about this marriage thing backwards?"

"One of the lawyers at the office had been pestering me to go out with him. I finally gave in to get him off my back. He put something in my drink and I woke up the next morning and realized that I had sex with him, not that I could remember any of it. Jon and I were intimate and when I missed my period, I wasn't sure who the father of the baby was. Rather than saddle Jon with Jack's baby, I held out until Angelina was born and had a blood test run. It proved beyond a doubt that Jon was Angelina's daddy and I accepted his proposal."

"Why didn't you charge the guy with rape?"

"I suppose that I was too embarrassed, Mom. I wasn't a snotty 18-year old who didn't know better. I wasn't a virgin, either. When Jon suggesting moving here, I was able to get out of that office. I told Jack that I might be pregnant and he told me it was my problem. And Mom, I never said anything to Jon about this, so don't you dare."

"But Jon is Angelina's father, right?"

“Yes he is and we can leave it at that. Angelina has type A blood, the same as Jon’s. Jack had type B blood. I don’t want to have to explain all of it to him.” (It’s a good thing that Melody didn’t have a drinking problem. The thing that keeps most alcoholics drunk is their secrets.)

“Your father and I both had type O.”

“I know. That’s why I have type O. A and B are dominant and O is recessive.”

“How do you know?”

“The doctor explained it to me.”

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Jon slowly worked his way up, first as a lead worker and finally as a supervisor. His promotion came in end of June 2005, just after Angelina’s 3rd birthday. Melody was now the private secretary of one of the partner’s and both were making reasonably good money, she more than he. Enough so that they were saving for a home of their own and had been. Jon had never gotten over what he saw on the morning of September 11, 2001. Melody had been at work and had only seen it in the evening when she’d gotten off work.

“You know, Mel, I can’t help thinking of 9/11 from time to time. Those people never had a chance. In Nebraska, we have tornadoes and people are prepared because they usually have a basement or a storm shelter. I don’t mind living in a mobile home, but what if we had an earthquake or something?”

“What do you suggest?”

“We have a portion of the price of a lot in savings. How about we buy a lot and move the mobile home? We won’t have to pay lot rent anymore and even with property taxes, we will be money ahead. I saw an acre and a half advertised in the paper. The guy wants \$100,000 and that’s a lot less than a city lot goes for.”

“Where is it?”

“South on 101 near the end of Paso Robles Avenue to the east. We could get off Tenant Avenue, turn south on Hill Road to Maple Avenue, which turns into Paso Robles Avenue.”

“Why is he selling it?”

“Their old house burned and they’re building a new one in town. There is a well and a septic system.”

“Is there a basement?”

“No, but they did have a storm shelter. It isn’t very big, but it beats what we have.”

“It isn’t any further to work, so I wouldn’t be opposed but I’d like to see it before I decide. That will put us pretty far in debt.”

“I just got that raise and with the raise and the money we save on lot rent, we should be able to pay the place off in no time.”

Two jobs, good incomes and no blemishes on their credit made Melody and Jon a shoo-in to get a conventional loan on the property. They had a 30% down payment and that probably helped too. With the money they saved on not paying lot rent, it was likely they’d have the land paid off and a home started before Angelina finished grade school.

A Home of Their Own – Chapter 3

On Tuesday April 24, 1984 at 1:15 pm, an earthquake of Richter magnitude (M_s) 6.2 occurred near Mt. Hamilton, 16 km (10 miles) east of San Jose, Santa Clara County. This earthquake was felt strongly throughout the San Francisco Bay area, and as far away as Sacramento, 140 km (86 miles) to the north. Fortunately, the epicenter was located in the sparsely populated Coast Ranges. The reported damage was about \$7 million. This figure does not include the amount of damage to the high technology industry in the area.

The most dramatic effect was near Morgan Hill, where damage consisted of houses falling off unbraced cripple foundations and incaving of stream banks. Morgan Hill is located 20 km (12 miles) south of the epicenter of the main shock, but only 3 km (2 miles) west of the zone of aftershock epicenters. This is because the aftershock zone propagated some 25 km southeastward along the Calaveras fault from the main shock epicenter.

The southeastern end of the 1984 Morgan Hill aftershock zone coincided with the epicenter of the 1979 Coyote Lake earthquake. The aftershock zone of the 1979 earthquake also extended to the southeast of its main shock. During the 1979 and 1984 earthquake sequences, the Calaveras fault zone ruptured in the subsurface along a total length of 45 km extending to the southeast from Mt. Hamilton. This rupture occurred mainly at earthquake depths of 1 to 10 km below the surface, according to focal depths determined by the US Geological Survey. The magnitude 6.2 Morgan Hill earthquake that damaged the San Jose area on April 24 caused the strongest horizontal earthquake acceleration ever measured. The unprecedented measurement of a shaking force one and a third times the force of gravity (1.3g) was recorded by the California Department of Conservation's Division of Mines and Geology (CDMG) on a strong-motion recorder at Coyote Dam, 17 miles south of the epicenter near Mount Hamilton.

Residents of Morgan Hill in Santa Clara County got a rude shock Thursday, November 6, 2003, when a minor earthquake rumbled through the area. According to the US Geological Survey, the magnitude 3.7 quake was centered six miles north of the city, at a depth of 4.6 miles. It struck at 2:04 pm. The shaker was followed by two aftershocks, a barely perceptible 1.7 temblor at 2:07, and a slightly stronger 2.2 at 2:11. According to a spokesman for the San Jose Office of Emergency Services, there were no reports of significant damage or injuries. Morgan Hill had its good points and its bad points. It was a nice place to live if you didn't mind the occasional rock and rolling, and we're not talking about music here.

Morgan Hill is also only 18 miles from Rio Del Mar on the California coast near the north end of Monterey Bay and is located at 37.13° N, 121.64° W. Morgan Hill is 15 miles east-northeast of Loma Prieta.

On October 17, 1989, at 5:04:15 pm PDT, an M_w 6.9 (surface-wave magnitude (M_s), 7.1) earthquake severely shook the San Francisco and Monterey Bay regions. The epi-

center was located at 37.04° N, 121.88° W near Loma Prieta peak in the Santa Cruz Mountains, approximately 14 km (9 mi) northeast of Santa Cruz and 96 km (60 mi) south-southeast of San Francisco. The earthquake occurred when the crustal rocks comprising the Pacific and North American Plates abruptly slipped as much as 2 meters (7ft) along their common boundary-the San Andreas Fault system. The rupture initiated at a depth of 18 km (11 mi) and extended 35 km (22 mi) along the fault, but it did not break the surface of the Earth.

Expecting a tornado? I don't think so; they don't have many in California.

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In his eagerness to have a place of their own, Jon hadn't paid close attention to the shelter on the old farmstead. It was, at best, an old fruit cellar and, at worst, a disaster looking for a place to happen. That it hadn't caved in during either the Morgan Hill quake or the Loma Prieta quake was in itself a miracle. It was a stone-lined hole in the ground and not much more. It was old and the mortar was falling out from between the rocks.

"Everything work in the trailer?"

"They switched the jets in the furnace, dryer and stove from natural gas to propane. Propane will cost more won't it?"

"A little, but not that much more than natural gas, it's about the same thing, liquefied gas or LNG. The primary difference is that you pay for delivery and that you buy it before you use it. We'll probably only need to fill the tank a few times a year. Propane contains more energy than natural gas. I was surprised when they said we could have a 500-gallon tank."

"I thought the label said 550."

"It did, but you can't fill them over 90% full and that's just on the short side of 500-gallons. If we were down in the southern desert, it would probably only be 80% in the summer and 90% in the winter."

"What are you working on?"

"Nothing, I was just checking out that storm shelter. The way the mortar is loose like it is, I think I'm going to need to rebuild it. I sure wouldn't want to be in it during another earthquake. What are you reading?"

"The report on the well. The water is good and softer than we thought. We won't have to have a water conditioner like we first thought and if we put in Culligan, I can have soft water for our laundry."

“Oh.”

“What do you mean, oh, Jon?”

“I already got the water conditioners. I got a good price plus help with the installation.”

“I thought we were going to wait until we got the report on the well.”

“We were. But, it took longer than it seemed it should have taken and I had a chance to get that deal on the water conditioners. If the report had said the water was really hard, we would have needed it. However, I suppose the good news is that we won’t need Culligan.”

“What did you get and how much did it cost?”

“I got 3 GMX model 800 units, 2 to place on the water inlet and 1 to place on the outlet of the hot water tank (tanks > 40 gallons require 2). The price was \$522 and I could install them myself, no plumbing is required. I picked them up so there wasn’t any shipping.”

“I thought you were looking at another brand.”

“I was, but it was over \$1,000 and used some kind of salt. These came to half of that and don’t add salt to the water.”

“Do they work?”

“They had a lot of customer testimonials including Burger King.”

“Go ahead and install them.”

“I already did.”

“Where are they?”

“They’re those little black boxes wrapped around the water lines.”

“I wondered what those were. I guess I know now. When did you put them in?”

“Last night after work. The papers said it might take a few days to notice a change.”

“What are you going to do about the storm shelter?”

“Remove the covering of dirt and enlarge it. A shelter 10’ square really isn’t very big. I figured maybe I’d make it about 15’ square, that would more than double the size and allow me to put more cover on top.”

“You’re going to be short of rock.”

“I thought maybe I could use concrete block for one of the walls and get a few more rocks to finish off the third wall. It’s just a retaining wall, I should be able to find instructions on the net.”

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It proved to be cheaper to buy concrete blocks than the rocks and Jon decided to put the whole shelter in using the concrete blocks. The rocks that had been used to construct the shelter originally were only 6” rocks and he was told that he’d get a much stronger wall if he used the blocks. It was a slow process. First he had to shovel off the soil, that took two weekends and next he had to remove the heavy roofing timbers. Apparently timbers had been used because it didn’t rain that much in the area. They were partially rotted through.

After he had the hole open, he used a mallet and knocked down the existing wall. He had a fair amount of time on his hands and took his time, doing all of the work by hand. For the next 8 weekends, he dug soil, using a wheelbarrow to pile it for later use. When the hole was about 24’ square he was ready for the next step. He’d left room to work on the outside of the wall after it was up. The man at the yard where he bought the blocks, mortar, Quikrete and tools suggested that he tar the outside of the block and put a drain tile around the bottom of the hole. He should also install rock around the outside so that any water he got would drain down to the tile. Plus seeing the excavation, he decided to make it 20’ square.

He was told that the wall would require a below grade foundation and at least one course of block below grade, two were preferred. If he put in the tile after the first course of block, he could build the walls out about 4-6” from the dirt and fill the space between the wall and the soil with pea gravel for the drainage. However, doing it this way, he’d have to tar the block as he went, possibly using a roller to roll the tar on. Jon took a weekend off to get reacquainted with Melody and Angelina.

The dimensions of block were 8x8x16” so that meant he had about 2’ of space all around the outside of the walls. It took him another weekend to dig the 2’x2’ foundation space. No one was going to see the foundation except the building inspector so he didn’t bother with forms. He had pulled a permit and he called on Monday to have the inspector come by and measure the foundation hole before he poured concrete the following weekend.

“Mel, I’m going to rent a mixer to mix the Quikrete for the foundation. I could do it by hand in the wheelbarrow, but I think it would take me too long.”

“What are we going to do if we lose power?”

"I was looking at a 20kw generator. It has a 1,800 rpm engine and uses propane. We could run it off our propane tank and wouldn't need a second source of fuel."

"Ok, how much does it cost and how long will it run on that tank of propane we have?"

"It costs about \$5,500 for the generator plus \$866 for an installation kit with a 100amp automatic transfer switch."

"\$6,500?"

"Close enough, by the time we pay for an electrician to install it. It uses anywhere from 1.2 gph at 25% power to 2.4 gph at full power."

"What kind is it?"

"Cummins GCMA."

"1800 rpm?"

"Yes."

"Power rating?"

"Twenty kilowatts, 56 amps per terminal, 112 amps."

"Fine, that's what we're getting. Consider it a once in a lifetime purchase. You'll have to stock up on filters, etc. Maybe you'd better buy a couple of cases and plenty of motor oil when we get the generator."

"How will we pay for it?"

"Do you have all the materials that you need to complete the shelter?"

"Everything but the roof, yes."

"We'll worry about it when you're ready for it. Did I tell you that the office is thinking of putting in a backup generator for the computer system and a large stock of emergency supplies?"

"Not that I recall."

"You're always working on the hole of yours; I'm not surprised that I forgot to mention it."

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Jon's next problem came a few weeks later when he had the walls up, tarred and the clay drainpipe and the gravel in place. He hadn't made proper allowance for a lid (ceiling). Not everyone on the planet is a building contractor, but to this point he was doing fine. He had deepened the hole to 12' and the foundation was below that grade level. It was a good time to stop, think and consider his next move.

"Taking the weekend off?"

"I'm at a stopping point, or more accurately stuck."

"What's the problem?"

"A roof to cover the hole."

"How high are the walls you built?"

"8'."

"And they 8' below ground level?"

"Yes, I wanted plenty of cover, Mel."

"What about some used I beams spaced about 24" on center?"

"I'd need 10 I-beams 20' long. Steel isn't cheap. I'll also need some road plates 4' wide x 10' long."

"Want to go shop scrap metal places next weekend? You should be able to divide the space in half with a frame load bearing wall to support the center of the 20' span."

"We can see what is available, what can it hurt?"

What they found was some 20' long by 8" high S style I-beams. They could cut everything to fit and sell the scrap steel back. They also found some used road plates made out of $\frac{3}{4}$ " steel that were 4' wide and 10' long. The steel was used and sold by weight with a nominal markup. It was available for \$200 per ton. About \$60 a ton over the going market rate for scrap steel in 2003. They also charged for delivery, again by weight. Mel wrote the check for 10 steel plates and 10 I-beams. Jon realized that Mel must have been saving up money to see the project through to completion.

"What's it going to take to finish this up?"

"Once I get the I-beams in place and supported by either a wall or steel posts, I need help laying the plates in place and we'll need to hire someone to weld them."

“Can you get by tacking them in place? We could put on a layer of tar, a layer of tar paper and another layer of tar.”

“Right and almost 20 weeks after I started this project, we’ll have a 20’ square box with electricity.”

“What are you going to do for stairs and an exterior door?”

“We’ll have 10 pieces of steel plate 2’ wide and 4’ long. Maybe we could get that welder to make us a door of some kind.”

“That would weigh a ton.”

“Oh, at least a ton, Mel. We’d have to find some way to lower and raise it. Maybe we could use hydraulic cylinders and a pump with a valve.”

“What about the door at the bottom of the stairs?”

“We bought 400ft² of steel plate. The shelter will only require 324ft². I think we should have bought one more sheet. If we had 76+ 40 or 116ft², I think we could fashion 2 blast doors. A standard door is 3’ x 7’, 21ft². If we made doors 3 layers thick, it would be about 2¼”. The outside door could be about the same size, and perhaps with the scrap steel, we could get by if we bought one more sheet.”

“Did you allow for air vents for us to breath and intake and exhaust for the generator?”

“Not yet, we’re going to have to do this one step at a time, I decided to use posts.”

A Home of Their Own – Chapter 4

Periodically there'd be another threat that either the FBI or DHS would announce. While the agencies claimed they'd prevented untold attacks against the country, there was never much proof. Bush had been reelected the previous year and Arnold won by an extremely slim margin. The winter of 2005-2006 saw the shelter completed and the generator installed and checked out. Jon ran both intake and exhaust pipes to the surface and covered them with rain caps. Most construction permits are good for 180 days for this type of project. The electrician routed conduit to the shelter from the ATS but the shelter still needed wiring and furnishing.

The government has a problem, disproving negatives. If they successfully prevented an atrocity, by preventing it from happening, how could they prove they were doing their job? If they caught someone, that was one thing. If, however their response forced the terrorists to back off, they couldn't prove anything. A recent example was the threat to the Chesapeake tunnels. They stopped traffic in both directions for a couple of hours and the tunnels weren't blasted. Was the threat real or imagined? If they hadn't acted and one of the tunnels had blown, there would have been hell to pay. CNN and Fox would have called it a massive intelligence failure and Congress would have wanted an independent commission to investigate. Now the motorists who used the tunnel were angry, and the media suggested they overreacted on unconfirmed intelligence. Lose-lose.

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"Wouldn't it have made more sense to figure out how to raise and lower the door before you had it installed?"

"All I have to do is connect the hydraulic cylinders to the door, Mel."

"Fine, but how are you going to get the door open to do that? It looks to me like you have a really tight seal."

"That's what the ring is for. I can use an engine hoist and a chain and lift it."

"Ok. Do you have an engine hoist?"

"No."

"What about the hydraulic cylinders?"

"Not yet. After I get the cylinders, the hydraulic pump and a valve, I'll borrow an engine hoist and do it all at once. Even if we can't use the shelter at the moment, the generator works. Have you shopped for furnishings?"

“What’s the use, I couldn’t get into the shelter to put them away anyway? I figured maybe I look at Goodwill and see about some used stuff. It’s not like we’d be in the shelter for more than a few hours.”

“If anyone ever attacked the US with nuclear weapons, it could be anywhere from 14 days to 100 days.”

“100 days on someone else’s used mattress, I don’t think so.”

“What are you thinking of?”

“Maybe a twin-over-full bunk bed with rails for Angelina.”

“What about the rest?”

“We could stand to have a new kitchen table and other things. Perhaps we can move our old stuff to the hole in the ground as we replace it.”

“Couldn’t you call it our shelter?”

“Watching you work on it all of these weeks and months has the idea of a hole in the ground etched into my memory. Anyway, Jon, since we can’t get into it at the moment, it isn’t really a shelter, now is it?”

“Sure it is. The stuff is on order and I’ll pick it up one day this coming week, assuming it comes in. I can borrow an engine hoist from Fred and lift the door. It will probably take me most of Saturday to get the cylinders, pump and control installed. You can go look for that bed you want and if you can find one, we can get it on Sunday afternoon.”

“What other things do you want to add?”

“A lot of things including the wiring, plumbing fixtures, air filter, an electric stove, a sewage pump to empty the holding tank into the septic system, storage cabinets to hold the food and supplies, firearms and ammunition...”

“What firearms? I’ve never been around guns and I don’t like them. What if Angelina got a hold of one?”

“Mel, try and imagine the worst disaster possible where a substantial portion of the population is dead or dying. Remember New Orleans and the looting? Remember people stealing guns and shooting at the police? Most of the disasters here in Morgan Hill are earthquakes and there has always been a sufficient police presence that there hasn’t been a problem, up to now. What would we do if that weren’t the case? I believe that we should prepare for the worst and hope for the best.”

Melody was from the San Francisco area. San Francisco tends to be liberal, Boxer and Feinstein are from there, a lot of gays live there and they drink French roast coffee.

SAN FRANCISCO - Frustrated by an increase in homicides, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors has proposed a sweeping ban on handguns, injecting this liberal city into the national debate over gun control.

The proposal would bar residents from keeping handguns in their homes or businesses and prohibit the sale, manufacture and distribution of any firearms or ammunition in San Francisco.

Only two other major US cities – Washington and Chicago – have implemented handgun bans, and both were quickly challenged in the courts. The national gun lobby already has vowed to challenge San Francisco's ban if voters approve it.

San Francisco has tried before to ban handguns. In 1982, a city ordinance was overturned because it applied to anyone who entered the city. A state court ruled that such actions were reserved for the state Legislature.

The supervisor who proposed the most recent ban, Chris Daly, said he and his counterparts already have received threatening calls and e-mails from gun supporters.

"Up to this point, I don't think anyone has come up with anything that's working," Daly said. "This is my contribution to trying to figure out a way to turn back the tide of violence."

San Francisco had 88 murders in 2004, up from 69 in 2003. Sixty-three of last year's homicides involved a firearm police Sgt. Neville Gittens said. The city has averaged 71 homicides a year for the past decade, from a low of 58 in 1998 to a high of 99 in 1995. About 777,000 people live in San Francisco, according to the 2000 census.

While last year's number of homicides is an increase from the previous year, it's comparable to other US cities of similar size - roughly 750,000 residents. In 2003, for example, Jacksonville, Fla., had 92 murders and Indianapolis had 112.

Chuck Michel, a Los Angeles lawyer who represents the National Rifle Association and the California Rifle and Pistol Association, said San Francisco's plan is ill conceived and misplaced.

"It's turning firearms into a scapegoat for failed city policies," Michel said. "Criminals are never going to have any kind of problem getting the kind of guns they want."

Michel said he's preparing a legal challenge, claiming a ban would violate the Second Amendment and that cities do not have the authority to regulate firearms.

If approved by a majority of the city's voters in November, the law would take effect in January 2006. Residents, who have bought nearly 22,000 handguns since 1996, would have 90 days to relinquish their weapons. The ban would make an exception for police officers, security guards, military personnel and others who require guns for their job.

Gun-control opponents argue such bans elsewhere have had little or no long-term effect.

Washington banned handguns in 1976 and noted an immediate 25 percent drop in firearm-related homicides, according to a 1991 study that appeared in the New England Journal of Medicine. The number of homicides fell from 13 per month to about 10.

In later years, however, the district became notorious for its violent-crime rate. Last year, the district had 248 homicides, or 20.7 per month - a rate of 44 homicides per 100,000 residents. By comparison, San Francisco has a rate of 9.2.

Daly, who hails from the Washington area, said it's unfair to compare the two cities. The district faces greater poverty, unemployment and "serious social issues that I wouldn't expect the majority of pro-gun America to understand," he said.

It's impossible to know just how many guns are on the streets of San Francisco because the state specifically forbids local governments from requiring firearms to be registered or licensed.

A buyer must fill out a form and submit to a background check when purchasing a gun, but that information does not need to be updated when the person moves, or loses or sells the gun.

There are just three licensed gun dealers in San Francisco, according to the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. Two of those are auction houses that deal mostly with antique weapons. Workers at the city's only retail gun store, High Bridge Arms in the Mission District, refused to speak with The Associated Press.

Gittens, the San Francisco police spokesman, said a concealed-weapons permit is currently required to carry a gun outside one's home or business in the city. Police have issued just 10 of those permits.

One resident who is exempt is Jack Hart, who spent six years as a California Highway Patrol officer until a motorcycle accident forced him to retire in 1963. He said he generally carries a .357 semiautomatic handgun with him for protection and doesn't think the ban, if passed, will be allowed to stand.

"Only the lawful people will be deprived," he said while at the Pacific Rod and Gun Club in San Francisco. "The others, it won't affect them at all."

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Fortunately, Morgan Hill was 70 miles from San Francisco. The cylinders, pump, valve and tank came in and Jon install the door lifts the following weekend. Sooner or later, Morgan Hill would have another earthquake; whether or not it would be a disaster like back in 1984 remained to be seen. There were other possibilities, too. Being only 18 miles from the coast meant that a bad Pacific storm could roll in. San Jose was only 20 miles away and what if there was a war? What better target than San Jose, the 11th largest city in the country and the heart of the Silicon Valley? Maybe a couple of targets, San Francisco was the 13th largest city. What would a nuclear attack do to the San Andreas Fault? Would 2 nuclear weapons exploding along its length set off a major quake?

It is easier to come up with questions than answers, but the USGS in reviewing the mini-series, *10.5* didn't seem to think so. Who would be dumb enough to attack the most powerful military power in the Free World? It's a long list, but the name at the top is Osama bin Laden. There's that Axis of Evil of George's, too.

"I'm not a hurricane expert," Chertoff said several times in responding to criticisms from members of a special House panel set up to investigate the dismal federal response to Katrina, which killed more than 1,200 people, flooded New Orleans and forced the evacuation of hundreds of thousands. Really? I never would have guessed. "There are many things that did not work well with the response," Chertoff said, adding later, "We are not where we need to be as a nation in the area of preparedness." He's right; most of the people in the United States aren't really prepared for a disaster. If they were, why would there be such a run on generators every time a hurricane threatened Florida?

Is it because when you need it there are none available and afterwards you choose not to spend the money? Buy one from Sears and put it on your Sears charge card. Do something, even if it's wrong. It might be a good idea to buy a strap for your refrigerator so the doors don't come open. Living in Florida must be challenging because you can't put in a below ground shelter. How do they put in swimming pools, pre-cast them and set them in the hole that's filled with water?

The Axis of Evil grew, you know. At first it was Iraq, Iran and North Korean. Then they added Libya, Syria and Cuba. Finally they added Belarus, Zimbabwe and Myanmar (Burma). Wal-Mart objected to them adding China to the list. Pakistan is helping us with Afghanistan and they had that earthquake, so they aren't evil. India does all of our tech support so they can't be evil either. Japan donated \$200,000 for Katrina relief so they're the good guys. I wonder how much we helped them after the Kobe earthquake. We'll know better next time. Cuba is complaining because we wouldn't accept Katrina aid from them.

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"What's to keep those cabinets from tipping over?"

“I left out four of the bolts and used toggle bolts to attach them to the wall, they’re solid, Mel.”

“Any idea what we should store?”

“Food that we’d normally eat for the short-term. We can rotate that in and out and keep it fresh. For the medium-term, perhaps staples and what we would need to make bread, etc. And for the long-term heirloom seeds that will reproduce themselves. I’ve been reading about which seeds are good to use.”

“You said 2 weeks or 3 months, right?”

“If the US were attacked with nuclear weapons, that’s right. We’d have to stay in the shelter from 14 up to 100 days. But, Mel, what about after? Would you and I still have jobs? Would San Jose even be there? Prepare for the worst and hope for the best means, to me, that we are able to provide for ourselves for a very long time.”

“Well I suppose that would mean that you wanted a rifle and shotgun to hunt?”

“We don’t need a lot of weapons, Mel. If I were to buy a .30 caliber rifle, it could be used for hunting and self-defense. If I bought a combination shotgun with 2 barrels, it could do the same.”

“I’ll go along as long as you put in a gun safe and teach me how to handle them. I mean, I want to know how to at least render them safe.”

“I can use that last cabinet for weapons and ammo, Mel. It has a locking handle and I can add a hasp and padlock.”

“Do you know what you want to get?”

“Perhaps a Remington 870 combo shotgun in 12-gauge, but I’m still working on the rifle. California has outlawed so many guns, a guy doesn’t have much of a choice.”

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“Show me how the outside door works.”

“Sure, lift up that rock over there. Use the key I gave you to open the box and then flip the switch to the open position. That activates the pump and raises the door to the full open position; I installed a limit switch to stop the pump when the door is almost fully open. To close the door, you flip the switch to the closed position it activates a valve, which drains the hydraulic fluid out of the system at a measured rate. When the system is empty a pressure limit switch turns off the valve.”

“Very high tech. What happens if the pump fails?”

“If we’re outside I’d borrow the hoist from Fred and open the door. If we’re inside, I have spare hoses, fluid and a manual pump. I printed step-by-step instructions so you could do it in a pinch. The pump is battery powered so even if the power is out and the generator doesn’t kick in, you can raise and lower the door. There is also a switch on the inside.”

“3-way circuit?”

“No, parallel circuits.”

“Explain what we have now.”

“Mel, we have 6 storage cabinets bolted to the wall with the last one being the future gun cabinet. I put in the twin-over-full bunk bed with rails for us to sleep on, a Summit model C60 all in one kitchen with refrigerator, sink, 4-burner electric stove and optional backsplash, microwave oven and upper cabinets. For laundry we have the Thor stackable slim full-capacity washer and dryer set. One of those shower cabinets is a shower and the other is the toilet. You’ll recognize the kitchen set.”

A Home of Their Own – Chapter 5

“What’s missing?”

“Food, utensils, pots and pans, firearms, communications equipment and several things. But, the shell is nearly complete, Mel.”

“I’ll take care of the first three and you do the rest.”

“Fine, you can fill the first cabinet with the short-term food, and I’ll stock the rest with the medium and long-term food supplies.”

Melody just increased her regular grocery shopping over the next 6 months and slowly filled the first cabinet. Jon contacted Walton Foods and put in a one-year supply of food for 5 people, one person at a time, as he had the funds. You hadn’t forgotten Nancy and Joanne, had you? Jon bought 2 folding cots. A deluxe one-year supply of food ran \$900 plus shipping. You had to add oil, sugar and coffee, if you drank it. The foods had storage lives of from 2 years for yeast to as long as 20 years for the textured vegetable proteins.

Several things included an upright freezer, the LUWA system, a laptop computer with a set of maps and an encyclopedia, a phone line, telephone, radio sets, antennas and last but not least the guns and ammo. For radios, Jon went with a SSB CB first and later the Kenwood TS-2000. The antennas sat on top of a guyed 60’ mast. The LUWA system came from Utah and it was the single most expensive item at ~\$5,200. The communications gear and computer shared a computer table and Mel added a 27” color TV and a battery powered radio with a power adapter.

Despite the spending spree, Jon and Mel were keeping up with their payments and Jon was saving up for his final purchase, the firearms and ammo. Perhaps it helped that they owned their old trailer outright. They had the payment on the land and their utility payments. The mobile home wasn’t permanently installed; they planned to build a home.

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“...Happy birthday to you.”

“Mommy, can I have cake and ice cream now?”

“Angie, don’t you want to open your presents first?”

“Oh all right.”

Angie got jeans and blouse plus a light jacket from Grandma. Aunt Joanne gave her jeans and a blouse plus a doll. Mommy and Daddy gave her a pink 16” bike with a bas-

ket and a bell on the handlebar and some shorts and t-shirts for summer. Angie told everyone thanks and dug into the cake and ice cream. Then, she had to try everything on to make sure it fit before she was allowed to ride her new bike with the training wheels. While Aunt Joanne helped Angie learn to ride the bike, Jon and Mel showed Nancy the storm shelter.

“This wasn’t here before was it?”

“I’ve been working on it for a year and a half, almost two, Nancy.”

“This isn’t a simple storm shelter.”

“To be candid, I watched TV the entire day on 9/11 and it left a lasting impression. In Nebraska we have a basement or a storm shelter in case of a tornado. Out here in California, we had neither. Once I examined the storm shelter the former residents had, I realized that it was too small and falling down. You’re right; there is nothing simple about this shelter. I have one more thing to add for it to be complete. By the way, there is food for Joanne and you and I bought 2 folding cots.”

“Is it earthquake proofed?”

“Latched storage cabinets, latching kitchen cabinets, everything is attached or bolted to the wall.”

“That quake in ‘84 did a lot of damage.”

“So I’ve heard. Anyway we have a 20kw generator in case we lose power, which runs off our propane tank. It could provide power for at least 2 weeks if needed. All I need to add are the guns and a few other supplies (first aid and survey meter set).”

“I have Paul’s guns, Jon. You ought to look those over before you buy any. You can keep them here if you want, I don’t use them.”

“Do you know what he had?”

“Not at all. You’ll just have to go through them.”

As it turned out, Paul didn’t share Melody’s fear of guns. He had a fair collection that included Winchester models 9422 in 22LR and in .22WRM and models 94 in .30-30, and .375 Winchester. There was a Winchester model 70 in .30-06, sans scope. He had 2 shotguns, both Remington 870s, one in 12-gauge and one in 20-gauge. He also had a 12-gauge 20” barrel with rifle sights reamed out to a 3” chamber. There were 2 Mini-14s, one blued and the other in stainless, with several 30 round magazines. In addition, there were 2 Marlin rifles, one in .357 magnum and the other in .44 magnum, both lever actions. There was also a group of single-action Ruger handguns. There was a Bearcat in .22LR, a Single-six convertible, 2 Blackhawk’s, one of those convertible to 9mm and

a Super Blackhawk. In addition, there was a Browning Hi-Power in 9mm. Plus, there were 2 Colt Pythons, one in a 4" barrel and one with a 2½" barrel, both .357 magnum. In addition there was a pair of the Remington 870 defensive shotguns, both 12-gauge. Finally there was a blued S&W Chief's special air weight in .38 special and an AR-7 collapsible rifle. In total 23 guns. Not bad, but no .30 -caliber rifle except for the Winchester model 70 and it didn't have a scope.

"Are you certain about this, Nancy? There are a lot of guns here."

"There is ammunition in those ammo boxes, too, I don't have any idea how much. Take it with Thanksgiving, I never cared for guns and neither do the girls."

One ammo box was a .30 -caliber ammo box filled with loose .223 -caliber ammo and a desiccant. The .50-caliber box held an assortment of ammo for all of the other weapons plus a desiccant. The assortment included a couple of bricks of .22LR, a couple of boxes of .22WRM, a box of .38 special, 2 boxes of Eagle 9mm, 3 boxes of .30-06, each a different bullet weight, several boxes of .357 and .44 magnum, a box of 20-gauge #6 shot and assorted 12 gauge ammo including 140 rounds of 3", 15-pellet 00 buck and half a dozen 5-count boxes of slugs.

"I can't believe it. Your father was quite the collector. He was definitely into cowboy guns; there are 5 single action revolvers and 6 lever action rifles."

"He wanted other guns, Jon, but he died before he could buy them. He always wanted a Colt Single Action Army in .45 Colt with a Winchester matching rifle. He always wanted a Springfield Armory M1A, whatever that is."

"Perhaps I should limit my gun purchases to a single firearm, the M1A that your father wanted. I don't know why he would want a revolver and rifle in .45 Colt when he had them in .44 magnum."

"I don't think it had anything to do with the size of the bullets. He had holsters for all of the guns; they're in a box in the garage."

o

Mel's father was a big man and the holsters for the single action guns didn't fit Jon. A trip to Baja could remedy that but he so wanted the M1A rifle. He also needed to acquire the survey meter with dosimeters, etc. from the fella in Texas. The latter won out; he did have a .30-06 to use. He showed the gun belts to a friend who did leatherwork for a hobby and the friend offered to cut the belts down to a 36 waist. That saved the trip to Mexico and after the survey meters (2) and dosimeters (5) came along with the KIO₃ (5) and other paraphernalia, Jon still had about half the price of the rifle.

"How about we go to Reno for the weekend? We haven't been anywhere in a while."

“Sounds like fun. Sure, why not.”

Reno has a few gun stores and if all you're buying is a spare magazine or two or a part for a rifle and pay cash, they don't check your ID. Jon bought a flashhider with a bayonet lug and 11 20-round magazines for the rifle that he didn't have. He also bought a case of Lake City 7.62x51mm surplus M80 ball. Mel spent most of the day playing the slots and video poker and they had a nice dinner and took in a show. Everyone was very happy on the drive home on Sunday.

When his friend finished with the holsters they fit perfectly and he could be a cowboy if he wanted, not that he did. He found a dealer who would sell him the M1A standard model with the black fiberglass stock for \$1,300 plus tax and fees. A M1A Super Match was \$3,400 plus tax and fees and he passed. He plunked his \$1,200 down on the counter and started filling out the paperwork. He planned on having the balance with next week's paycheck. The dealer told him it might be as long as 3 weeks to get the rifle in and if he had it paid for when it arrived, he could take it home. Meanwhile Jon familiarized himself with the Mini-14s, which were supposed to be a direct knock off of the M14 rifle upon which the M1A was based. He later learned they weren't.

“Jon, have you seen the bill for the propane, the stuff must have really gone up in price.”

“How much is it?”

“\$3.75 a gallon.”

“That is a sharp increase; it must be from the storm last year.”

“I think the oil companies are just gouging us.”

“I have everything done with the shelter. Maybe we should see about putting in a second 550-gallon propane tank.”

“Did you get your M1A?”

“I ordered it last week. I paid the balance due on it today and can have it when it comes in. Why don't I put \$150 a week aside and when we get the money, go for the second tank?”

“Whether we do or don't get it, it couldn't hurt to have some savings available. Are you going to open a saving account?”

“With them paying 1% interest? No, I'll just keep the cash tucked away for a rainy day or the tank, whichever comes first.”

o

Christmas Day 2006...

"Do you like all of your presents?"

"Yes Mommy. Can I go play?"

"Don't you want to try everything on?"

"Why? It's always too big and I have to grow into it."

"4½ going on 40."

"Oh Jon, she can try everything on later. Mom and Joanne should be here by now; I wonder what's keeping them."

"Give your Mom a call."

"I did and no one answered."

Ring. Ring.

"Get that will you, it might be Mom."

"Hello."

"This is Jon, my wife is tied up in the kitchen, tell me."

"Oh. Which hospital?"

"What was that call?"

"Your Mom and Joanne were in an accident. We have to go immediately to Kaiser Permanente Santa Teresa Medical Center and Medical Offices in San Jose. I'll get Angie and a toy."

"Didn't they tell who was hurt or how bad?"

"All they said was to come immediately, Mel."

"Can't you go any faster?"

"Yes, but we won't get there any sooner, there is a CHP on my tail and I'm going the speed limit."

o

"I'm Melody Jones; I understand that my mother Nancy and sister Joanne were brought here."

"Last name?"

"Becker."

"Your mother is in surgery. I call someone to explain about your sister. Please have a seat."

"Well?"

"Have a seat, Mom is in surgery and someone is coming to tell us about Joanne."

"I'm Dr. Francis, you're Melody Becker Jones?"

"Yes."

"Your mother is in surgery and it will be a while, I'm afraid. Your sister took the blunt of the collision and died at the scene. There is a CHP officer who just arrived who can give you details; would you like to speak to him?"

"Please," Mel sobbed.

"Daddy, what's wrong with Mommy?"

"Hush, Angie, I'll explain later. Mel?"

"Take Angie for a walk, will you?"

"Sure. I'm so sorry."

"I know so am I."

"Do you want an ice cream, Angie?"

"Daddy, what's wrong with Mommy?"

"Your aunt Joanne got hurt in a car accident and went to live with God."

"She died, huh?"

"Yes."

"What about Grandma?"

“She’s hurt too, but they’re trying to fix her.”

Angie started to cry. Jon thought it was the news about her Aunt and her Grandma, but decided to verify that.

“What’s wrong, punkin?”

“I don’t want Mommy to die,” Angie sobbed.

“Mommy isn’t hurt punkin, she will be ok.”

“What about Grandma?”

“We won’t know for a while. Chocolate or vanilla?”

“I don’t want anything, Daddy.”

“Mrs. Jones?”

“Here.”

“I’m sorry.”

“What was that, Daddy? Mommy is crying again.”

“Your Grandma went to live with your Aunt Joanne.”

o

“It was a combined will, Mel; the attorney represented both your mom and your dad. He is the Executor of your mother’s estate and Joanne’s.”

“Daddy had 4 plots.”

“Good, we’ll put them with him. Is there anything I can do?”

“Hold me.”

Jon had been through this before when he was in the Air Force. A driver crossed the median and hit his folk’s head on. The estate had been left in trust, after expenses, to be shared by him and his bother on his brother’s 30th birthday. Jon’s brother, Rob, would be 30 very soon. The estate was substantial, and had grown over the past 10 or more years. Jon had been willing to wait until it settled to use the money to build a home. The trailer wasn’t perfect, but it was a home.

A Home of Their Own – Chapter 6

“I know a good deal more about you than you suspect. I know, for instance, that you’re in love with a woman. It is perhaps a strange circumstance that we both should be in love with the same woman. The first evening I came to this café, I knew there was something between you and Ilsa. Since no one is to blame, I - I demand no explanation. I ask only one thing. You won’t give me the letters of transit: all right, but I want my wife to be safe. I ask you as a favor, to use the letters to take her away from Casablanca.”

“Of all the gin joints in all the towns in all the world, she walks into mine.”

“I love that movie, when was it made?”

“1941 or 1942. Do you want to take Angie to the funerals tomorrow?”

“I think so, she should have a chance to say goodbye. She thinks they are sleeping, the fellas did a really good job on both of them.”

“What about the Cemetery?”

“I don’t think so. Fred’s wife Eleanor said we could drop her off and she would watch her.”

“You and I are running short on family. All I have is Rob and you an uncle.”

“Uncle Elmer. I haven’t seen him or Aunt Mary in years. After he had the fight with Mom, they never spoke to each other again.”

“When was that?”

“At Daddy’s funeral.”

“Think they’ll show up?”

“I don’t even know if they’re alive.”

o

“Tell your Grandma and Aunt Joanne goodbye.”

“Bye Grandma. Bye Aunt Joanne. I’ll miss you. What now, Mommy?”

“The people will talk a lot and there will be some music. Then you can go and stay with Fred and Eleanor.”

“I like Eleanor, but Fred is grumpy.”

“Hush, Angie, they’re starting.”

o

“Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust.”

“It’s chilly. Let’s go get Angie and make a pot of hot chocolate.”

“Sure, Mel. Maybe some buttered toast to dip in the cocoa?”

“Strange habit. Where did you come by that?”

“I have no idea. I started doing it when I was a kid.”

“Next weekend we’re supposed to go to Mom’s and clean out all of the things she wanted me to have.”

“What about Joanne’s things?”

“She left specific instructions. The attorney said he’d take care of her things.”

“I’m surprised she had a will.”

“She did that after Daddy died.”

“Rob’s birthday is next week, you know. He will be 30.”

“And?”

“We can finally build a home. They will be dividing and distributing the trust fund.”

“What Trust Fund?”

“Oh, I didn’t tell you. When my parents died, the estates were placed in a Trust Fund to be distributed to Rob and me on his 30th birthday.”

“Is it a lot?”

“Enough to build a new home and pay for it.”

“With Mom and Joanne’s estates, we can pay off the land and be out of debt. Maybe it’s time.”

“Time for what?”

“A brother for Angie.”

◦

“Well?”

“It’s a boy. Start picking out names.”

“Paul or John?”

“John Paul?”

“Sounds very religious, sure. Wait, do you want a son named John Paul Jones?”

“He can be a sailor when he grows up.”

“As long as he isn’t a baggage handler.”

“Or, a lawyer.”

“Mommy, what’s so funny?”

“Angie, you’re going to have your very own little brother.”

“When?”

“In a few months, about November.”

“What’s his name?”

“John Paul Jones.”

“My name is Jones.”

“Right so are your Daddy’s and mine. What are you watching on TV?”

“Nickelodeon. Rugrats.”

“After this show, you can take a bath.”

“With bubbles?”

“Yes, with bubbles.”

“How long do you plan to work?”

“I guess that depends, but probably until my 8th month or so. That will vest my pension.”

“How about a 2-story house with 4 bedrooms?”

“I wasn’t planning on having any more children.”

“No, silly. One for us, one for Angelica, one for John and one for guests.”

“Do we want to spell John with or without the H?”

“With, like my father. My name was supposed to be spelled John.”

“Why isn’t it?”

“Typo at the hospital. They didn’t find out until the birth certificate arrived. Mom liked it and I became Jon.”

“Anyway, I’d prefer a one-story house. In 20 years or so, you’ll agree with me.”

“Sure. Full basement?”

“Can we?”

“I don’t see why not. A basement is essentially free space and the only extra cost is the walls. It’s not easy to put hardwood floors on a concrete slab.”

“You want hardwood floors?”

“Yes, with area rugs.”

“Tile floors in the kitchen and bath areas?”

“If you want.”

“Do you want a study or den?”

“That can all go in the basement.”

“Main floor laundry?”

“If you’d prefer. We’re probably talking 3,000ft² at \$100 a foot.”

“Can we afford a \$300,000 home?”

“We can.”

“In that case...”

“In that case, let’s do it.”

“Did Joanne have uninsured motorist?”

“I think so, why?”

“Did anyone think to file a claim?”

“I’ll have to call the attorney, I don’t know.”

o

The home was 4 bedrooms, 2½ baths with a full basement. It had hardwood floors throughout with area rugs, or tile floors. All of the furnishings were new; they kept the trailer as a finished extra living area. Jon had a 5,000-gallon propane tank buried and it fed both the house and the shelter. The power for the house came from the ATS, which was connected to the same 20kw standby generator. The twin-over-full bunk bed in the shelter was replaced by a full-over-full bunk bed. Melody worked until her pension vested and then gave her notice. She told the firm that she wouldn’t be returning to work after John came. John Paul Jones was born November 12, 2007 and he weighed 7lbs 1oz.

Nancy had a full set of very good china and a service of 12 in sterling silver that that Mel got. Most of her furniture was donated to charity and the house had sold for a good price, \$200,000. When that was added to Nancy’s estate, Mel did very well. Joanne had a smaller estate, which she left to Angelica. Mel and Jon were named co-trustees and they were free to invest the money anyway they saw fit. After much discussion, Mel suggested, insisted actually, that the money be invested in precious metals. They bought gold and silver coins, US Eagles, and stored them in a safe in the shelter.

They had the land and home paid for; money in the bank and Jon was still working at SJC, now a manager. In the Middle East the war had finally wound down and Bush had brought the troops home, but not before many more had died. The Republican Party had taken a beating in the 2006 elections and they didn’t seem to have a good prospect for 2008. Hillary Clinton lost out in the early Primaries, but she had been reelected as the Senior Senator from New York. She was in class I and she had been up for reelection in 2006. Class II would run in 2008 and class III in 2010. Senator Schumer was a class III Senator. The Senate was divided 51 Republicans, 49 Democrats; Jim Jeffords from Vermont had retired. The House was equally as close and it appeared that the Republicans could lose control of one or both parts of Congress in 2008.

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The Presidential election of 2008 is a long way off, but Republicans better start worrying about it now. The 2006 midterm election? Republicans are likely to hold onto the Senate and House. But 2008 is another story. In the midst of a Republican era, Democrats stand a good chance of taking the White House then. Even Senator Hillary Clinton of New York – or perhaps I should say especially Hillary Clinton – has realistic prospects of winning.

What's the problem for Republicans? There are at least five of them. The field of Republican candidates is weak. Democrats will have an easier time than Republicans in duplicating their strong 2004 voter registration and turnout drive in 2008. Democrats, despite their drift to the left and persistent shrillness, barely trail Republicans at all in voter appeal. Besides, they may sober up ideologically in 2008. And the media, unless John McCain is the Republican nominee, will be more pro-Democratic than ever.

Finally, there's the media, more aptly called the Republican-hating media. We've already seen what they are willing to do to protect Hillary Clinton. They trashed a perfectly respectable, though highly critical, biography of Hillary by veteran newsman Ed Klein. It got so bad that conservatives, too, began attacking his book. If this is happening in 2005, imagine what lengths the press will be willing to go to in 2008 on Hillary's, or another Democrat's, behalf.

So Republicans have a lot to worry about. George W. Bush's current troubles are small stuff compared to the party's prospects for losing the presidency in 2008. (Fred Barnes)

Should the media be allowed to influence elections? If you say no, as I do, remember Ben Franklin and Thomas Paine. Of course, since this is a Democracy and not a Republic, it only makes sense for the Democrats to be in power. She was going to invite the UN in, then what?

o

The League of Nations was an international organization founded after the First World War at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919. The League's goals included disarmament; preventing war through collective security; settling disputes between countries through negotiation and diplomacy; and improving global welfare. The League did not, in the long term, succeed. The outbreak of World War II was the immediate cause of the League's demise, but there was also a variety of other, more fundamental, flaws.

The United Nations, or UN, is an international organization established in 1945. The UN describes itself as a "global association of governments facilitating cooperation in international law, security, economic development, and social equity." In recent years there have been many calls for "reform" of the United Nations. There is, however, little clarity, let alone consensus, about what "reform" might mean in practice. Some want the UN to play a greater or more effective role in world affairs; others want its role reduced to humanitarian work. In 2004 and 2005, allegations of mismanagement and corruption re-

garding the Oil-for-food Program for Iraq under Saddam Hussein led to renewed calls for reform.

On June 17, 2005, the US House of Representatives passed a bill to slash funds to the UN in half by 2008 if it does not meet with certain criteria laid out in the legislation. This reflects years of complaints about anti-American and anti-Israeli bias in the United Nations. The United States of America is estimated to contribute about 22% of the UN's yearly budget, making this bill potentially devastating to the UN. The Bush administration and several former US ambassadors to the UN have warned that this may only strengthen anti-America sentiment around the world and would only serve to hurt current UN reform movements.

In general, the UN has shown a reluctance to act upon its resolutions, or prevent nations ignoring its resolutions, making it appear weak and evoking comparisons to the League of Nations. This was highlighted in 2003 by controversy surrounding the United States-led invasion of Iraq, which conducted in the face of strong disapproval by a majority of members; by Iraq's converse direct defiance of UN weapons and humanitarian resolutions; and by Israel's decade-long defiance of resolutions calling for the dismantling of settlements in the West Bank and Gaza. These and similar failures stem from the UN's intergovernmental nature – in many respects it is an association of member states, and not an organization in its own right.

It was a troubled world during the last year of George W. Bush's Presidency. Are you surprised?

◦

For many years it has been widely speculated that the PLA Navy (PLAN) is interested in building or acquiring an aircraft carrier to improve its power projection capabilities. Although the PLAN is known to have been studying the aircraft carrier building technology and operational principles since the mid-1980s, no concrete evidence had been found proving the existence of such a building program until recently when the Kuznetsov-class carrier Varyag, obtained by the PLAN from Ukraine in 2002, emerged from a Dalian Shipyard dry dock painted in PLAN grey.

◦

“She did and it completely slipped his mind.”

“What did she have for coverage?”

“100-300. He called them, the check is in the mail. He suggested that we add the \$100 to Angelina's Trust and use the other \$100 for John because that represents Mom's settlement.”

“Good idea.”

A Home of Their Own – Chapter 7

China is believed to have been developing a suitable fighter aircraft for its future aircraft carrier. Sources inside Russia stated that China may be intent to acquire the thrust-vectoring control (TVC)-equipped AL-31FN engines in order to develop a carrier-capable version of the Chengdu J-10 fighter. The TVC would enable the fighter to take-off from a Russian-style ski-jumping flight deck and to reduce the aircraft's landing speed, an important safety concern for carrier aircraft.

It is also possible that China will purchase the Russian Su-33 naval fighter aircraft or its improved variant for its future carrier. The Su-33, developed from the Su-27 fighter, which has been serving with the PLA Air Force (PLAAF) for over a decade, is deemed to be more suitable for Varyag since the fighter was originally developed for Kuznetsov class and is 100% compatible with the Russian-designed carrier.

The original power plant onboard Varyag has been removed by Ukraine as a part of the contract, but China is relatively experienced in steam turbine technology, and may be able to fit the ship with an indigenous design.

In September 2005 came news that China had ordered 8 IL-78 (NATO codename: Midas) aerial refueling tankers along with 30 IL-76MD transport aircraft from Russia. This confirmed the earlier speculation that the PLAAF was considering purchasing the tanker to expand the range of its latest Su-30MKK fighter-bomber fleet. The IL-78 tanker was demonstrated to China during the joint military exercise between two countries in September 2005.

The Ilyushin IL-76MD (NATO codename: Candid) is a medium-range military transport aircraft designed by Ilyushin Design Bureau and built by Chkalov Aircraft Production Association at its Tashkent plant in Uzbekistan. The PLA Air Force (PLAAF) acquired 14 IL-76MDs in the early 1990s, and ordered additional 30 IL-76MD transports and 8 IL-78 tankers in September 2005. The PLAAF also operates a KJ-2000 airborne warning and control system (AWACS) aircraft based on the Russian A-50 airframe.

The PLZ45 is the 155mm self-propelled gun-howitzer developed by NORINCO for the export market. The artillery system was jointly developed by the 123 Factory, 127 Factory, 674 Factory and Beijing University of Science and Technology. The PLZ45 beat the US and European competitors in a bid to provide self-propelled artillery systems for the Kuwait Army in 1997. Latest Internet source photos suggest that the artillery may have also entered service with the PLA.

The PTL02 wheeled assault tank destroyer armed with a 105mm rifled gun was developed by NORINCO for the PLA new light (rapid reaction) mechanized infantry divisions. The vehicle has a three-man turret derived from the Type 88 MBT, and a 6x6 wheeled chassis based on the WZ551 APC. Chinese officials have confirmed that the vehicle is now in production.

In early 2005 the new airborne IFV, was spotted in PLA exercise. The first clear photo of the vehicle was revealed by a Chinese military magazine in February 2005. Unconfirmed reports suggested that the vehicle's designation is ZLC2000. Later during the Peace Mission 2005 China-Russia joint exercise in August/September, more photos of the vehicle were published by Chinese media.

Despite the speculations that the vehicle might be a copy of the Russian BMD-3, close examinations of the vehicle indicated that it is in fact a new design with different hull layout and weapon system. Compared to the BMD-3, the Chinese airborne combat vehicle is slightly higher, and its 30mm main gun differs to the Russian design. It is possible, however, that the vehicle has certain Russian technologies, particularly the multiple parachute air dropping system. It's tracked, not 6x6.

China obtained the Russian 9K116 Bastion (NATO codename: AT-10 Stabber) 100mm laser beam riding, gun-fired anti-tank guided missile technology and its fire control system in the late 1990s. The missile can be launched from the 100mm smoothbore tank/anti-tank gun, with a maximum range of 5km. The missile has an 80% probability of hit at 4000 meters. Armor penetration is 550-600 mm of RHA, and the projectile has an effective envelope of 100 to 5000 meters.

Since late 2004 there has been some major shift in the Russian government's policy towards the sale of bomber aircraft to China. On 13 January 2005, the chief of the Russian Air Force, Vladimir Mikhailov, said that the Russian military could sell a number of Tu-22M3 and Tu-95 bomber aircraft to China. He confirmed that Russia would send Tu-22M3 to take part in the joint China-Russia military exercise in 2005, and Russia's clear intention to sell the aircraft to China. It is not known if China is still interested in buying this aircraft.

This dramatic change may have been a direct result of the Russian Air Force's decision in 2004 to retire hundreds of its advanced aircraft, including 40 new TU-22M3 (Backfire C) bombers. The move by Moscow was seen as a cost-cutting effort to allow for future development of advanced aircraft. Nevertheless, with a max range of 4000km with refueling, the bomber would have substantially upgraded the PLAAF's coverage of the areas around Taiwan or the South China Sea. Though spare parts would become a problem, the mere possession of this system, let alone any production capability, would have constituted a substantial upgrade to the PLAAF. The 40 new Backfire C bombers were delivered mid-2006.

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As of 2007, when North Korea exploded a nuclear weapon, it became clear that the Axis of Evil was alive and healthy. A few months later, another nuclear weapon was tested in the Indian Ocean. Pundits speculated that the weapon had been developed and tested by Iran. Was there ever any doubt as to the outcome of the trial of Saddam Hussein? He's got hung. Fortunately the US had withdrawn and weren't there when the expected

Civil War began. Sunnis v. Shiites and Kurds, or something like that, although some observers felt that it was the Kurds v. the Sunnis and Shiites.

The Saudis sharply cut production and shipments of oil. Bush flew to Riyadh to discuss the matter, but left angry and quite apparently surprised. Iran had previously announced that all of their oil shipments would be to the People's Republic of China. China oil consumption had grown in recent years and at the moment exceeded that of the United States. In 2004, Iran and China signed a Memo of Understanding to award development of the Yadavaran oil field to China's state-owned Sinopec. The countries also decided to form a joint oil and gas committee to follow up strategic cooperation in the area of energy including joint investment in construction of an LNG refinery in Iran.

Hey, I don't make most of this up! The things that are pure conjecture have a reasonable likelihood of occurring. The Iran-China oil deal in 2004 is a fact and you can check it out. IMHO, things follow a natural course. Iran gets in bed with China because they have oil that China needs and China had technical expertise that Iran needs. Need I elaborate? Iran has been extracting Plutonium for some time, you know. And Israel doesn't have ANY nuclear weapons that they will admit to. Correct me if I'm wrong.

o

In reality there are 10 nuclear nations: US, Russia, China, France, UK, India, Pakistan, North Korea and Iran. I heard that perhaps a South American country was looking into them. In fact, another report I read said that as many as 40 nations had the capacity to develop nuclear weapons in short order. We know that China is in the process of developing the DF-31A with a range of between 10,000 and 12,000km. We also know that China has one type 092 submarine armed with nuclear missiles. If the United Nations was worth the paper it was written on, it could stop this insanity. What will happen in 2008 when the UN loses 11% of its funding half of the amount provided by the US?

Many of us watched the movie *War Games* where Matthew Broderick tapped into a computer named Joshua that had total control of the US nuclear missiles. Lucky him, he knew of a game, Tic-Tac-Toe, that demonstrated the futility of certain situations, and seconds before the end of the world, the computer shut down. Do you remember *The Manhattan Project* where a high school kid built an a-bomb as a science project? Paul Stevens' high school science project has gotten a little out of hand. He just built an atomic bomb. Now he's got 11 hours to make sure it doesn't work. The design was Fat Man, not Little Boy and he only made one little mistake.

After 60 years of a Constitution that was forced on the Japanese, they are beginning to get other ideas. Somewhere along the line they've forgotten about Hiroshima and Nagasaki. During WW II, the Japanese had a highly advanced atomic program and reportedly may have tested an atom bomb. In addition to reforming Japan's economic and political systems, Koizumi is focusing attention on the country's sacrosanct Constitution. Japan's self-defense force boasts one of the world's largest military budgets, but it is limited to defense activities by Article 9 of the Constitution, which states that "the Japa-

nese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as a means of settling international disputes,” and that “land, sea and air forces, as well as other war potential” to accomplish such aims “will never be maintained.” Koizumi’s cabinet selections also reflect his commitment to crafting a new role for Japan’s armed forces. For example, Gen Nakatani, the Director General of Japan’s Defense Agency (JDA), advocates reinforcing the country’s defense capabilities including participating in collective defense actions. He believes this will require a revision of the Constitution.

Foreign Minister Nobutaka Machimura has dismissed suggestions that militarism is again on the rise in Japan. He said this in an apparent rebuttal of claims to this effect by left-wingers at home as well as some of Japan’s neighbors in East Asia who regard the presence of Self-Defense Forces in the Middle East as an indication that Japan is again flexing its military muscles. “Some people still say it shows the rise of militarism to send troops overseas,” Machimura said.

o

“Did I miss something, Jon or does it appear to you that we’re on the verge of WW III?”

“Behind door 1 is a terrorist attack; behind door 2 is a thermonuclear war; and, behind door 3 is a severe climate change. Any one of the 3 can put the US between a rock and a hard spot. If you’d prefer a different set of doors, behind door 1 is a major earthquake; behind door 2 is one of the calderas erupting; and, behind door 3 is the price of gas going to \$7 a gallon.”

“Any door I choose, were screwed, right?”

“Very un-lady like Mel, but in a nutshell yes.”

“When?”

“I think sooner than later.”

“You never did teach me about those firearms.”

“Easily remedied. I checked the expiration dates on everything in the shelter and replaced anything in need of replacement. Even with all of the money we’ve spent, we have a substantial sum in the bank. I would propose pulling some of it out and investing it in precious metals like we did with Angelina’s inheritance from Joanne. Our cars are on their last legs. I think we should get you a good diesel powered car and me a new Dodge Ram 3500 4x4 Quad Cab Diesel, with a winch and so forth. I can add a 98-gallon cross bed tank and have a fuel capacity of 133 gallons. We can add an underground diesel tank and store a year supply of diesel.”

“If you think that wise, I’ll get the tank, fuel and pump and you buy the vehicles.”

“Fine with me.”

“How big of a fuel tank?”

“2,000-gallons? Plus a gallon of PRI-D to stabilize the fuel.”

“Then what?”

“We wait for the unimaginable and hope it doesn’t come.”

“It already has, last Christmas. I’m not looking forward to this Christmas at all.”

“Angelina is. Have you seen her shopping list?”

“We can get some of it for Christmas and then there’s her birthday in May.”

“Dave called.”

“What’s new at LAX?”

“He’s retiring. He said if I wanted his job, he’d make a recommendation and it would be a lot more money.”

“What did you tell him?”

“I told him I liked the job I had, that we just finished building our new dream home and that we had a new son. Thanks, but no thanks.”

“Are you sure, Jon?”

“Absolutely, Mel. Everything I want is in Morgan Hill, family, friends, new home, and a reasonable job. Why would I even think of moving?”

“A realtor called and asked if we’d be interested in selling our home.”

“What did he think it was worth?”

“\$1.25 (million).”

“If I could, I’d buy the piece of land between us and Fred. Then we’d have 5 acres and room to run some horses. I’ll bet Angie would love to have a pony.”

“Funny you should mention it, Jon. Those 3½ acres are on the market.”

“Really? Could we afford it?”

“We have the \$200,000 from the insurance settlement on the uninsured motorist. It’s our money and technically not all of it is part of the Trust we’re holding for Angie. I have his number, why don’t you call him and see what they’re asking?”

“Well?”

“They’re asking \$60 (thousand) an acre, \$210,000. I offered \$200,000. He said they hadn’t had any offers, we may have it.”

“Then what?”

“If we get it, fence it and buy a prefabricated horse barn. We could get Angie a pony for her 6th birthday. We might want to get us horses to keep the grass down. I’ve never asked, do you ride?”

“Squire Jones and his family? Yes, I used to ride, but that at 15 years ago. Where would you get the barn?”

“There’s a company in the LA area named Castlebrook Barns that sells them. They have an ad on the Internet.”

“What’s the downside? There’s always a downside?”

“I don’t know that there is one. We’d have to sell the generator and install something bigger if it’s going to cover the house, trailer, barn and shelter. We’d probably have to replace the ATS and go to a 200amp switch. It would either be that or add a second generator and a second switch. Horses aren’t cheap but I was raised on a farm so I can handle the chores.”

“We bought that generator to last a lifetime, Jon. Could we just add a second?”

“It would mean expanding the area under the stairwell into the shelter. If we did it just right and added a controller to synchronize the generators, we’d only run one most of the time, assuming we needed them at all. We’d still need to swap out the ATS, but it makes sense to me.”

“What about the propane?”

“We might want to add a second tank. Let’s wait and see if they accept my offer on the land before we start buying a barn, second generator and another propane tank.”

o

“It’s nice to have money for a change. It’s awful how we came into it, but we can do so much for Angelina and John.”

“Like our new home?”

“It’s perfect, Jon. What do you want to do with the basement?”

“At the moment, nothing. We have to concentrate on getting the land fenced and putting up that barn. I got the 8-stall barn they had on special. I talked to a contractor about expanding the area under the stairwell and the dealer is looking for another generator and the controller. We can swap out the 200amp ATS anytime. I’d say that by the time we’re done, we’re looking at \$300,000. The realtor said that the value of our acreage would approach \$2 million, easy.”

“We even have a house if we decided to hire a domestic or someone to help with the livestock.”

“A domestic? Don’t get the big head on me, Mel. It’s not going to be a lot of work taking care of a pony and two horses.”

“We’ll see.”

Translation: We’re getting a domestic and someone to take care of the horses; you just don’t know it, yet.

o

“It looks like something out of a travel guide. I like it. I wish we had the basement finished.”

“Have you figured out what you want to do?”

“Divide it in half with the utilities and storage on one side and a recreation room with a wet bar on the other side. I thought maybe we could panel it and put tile on the ceiling.”

“I suppose you want a 54” flat screen and a popcorn popper, right?”

“If the prices on the big screens ever come down, maybe. We have Mom’s RCA with the 36” screen, that’s big enough for now. The popcorn popper is optional. It’s just something else to clean.”

“Do you miss not working?”

“Not working? Are you nuts? I have a precocious 5-year-old and a new baby that needs a lot of attention. As lovely as this house is, it’s a lot of work to keep clean. You’re lucky I don’t feed you macaroni and cheese.”

A Home of Their Own – Chapter 8

Folks, what we have here is a 30-something mother with her second baby, a huge new house and experience working in a law office for the better part of 10 years married to a guy who worked his way up to manager at the baggage handling operation at SJC. They only have money because his family's estate settled and her mother and sister were killed in an auto accident many months before. Otherwise, they'd be living in their old singlewide mobile home. The term is Nuevo-rich. They're not spending it all up in one fell swoop, but they've fulfilled most of their dreams and have found that they took a pretty big bite.

No matter what comes along, doors 1-6 or maybe door 7, they're prepared. Door 7? I didn't mention a tsunami. No sweat, they're 18 miles from the coast at an elevation of ~350'. They're about the same distance from a bunch of major earthquake faults.

May 2008...

For her 6th birthday, Angelina got a pony. John was 6 months old now and the acreage was totally upgraded. It looked like the Republicans would be running John McCain for President and John Edwards was the most likely candidate for the Democrats. He indicated that he might select Hillary Clinton as his running mate. Bill wasn't a happy camper. The PRC, Vietnam, Taiwan and Japan were in a diplomatic hassle over the oil and gas in the Sea of Japan and the East and South China Seas. Bush had talked to Congressional leaders about increasing the state of readiness of American Naval Forces but Congress had its hands on the purse strings and it was a Presidential Election year. They only let him go to DEFCON 4. The threat level was blue or yellow, depending on what part of the country you lived in. New York, for example, was at yellow, one level above most of the country. China had encroached on the new Vietnamese discoveries and aside from posturing the UN did nothing.

"Are you going to give your pony a name?"

"Doesn't he have one already?"

"They called her Star."

"I can remember that, can I ride her?"

"I'll get you a stool, Angie. You need to learn to get on and off yourself."

"What kind is she?"

"A quarter pony, Angie."

"Are Mom and you going to get ponies?"

“Ponies are a little small for us, Angie; we’re going to get quarter horses.”

“We are?”

“The breeder had 2 mares, about 4 years old and bred for the first time. We’ll have to get our own tack, but we won’t be able to ride them much until after they foal.”

“How big are they?”

“About 16 hands or 60” and they’re stock quarter horses, not racers.”

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“I fed the stock, Jon. We really should consider getting someone to help with the stock.”

“I’m sorry I was late, most of the flights were full and everyone had their limit of baggage. You go ahead and do whatever you think is right.”

“I talked to some folks in town and they recommended that we talk to a couple named Martinez. He’s been working on a ranch and she’s been cleaning motels.”

“What kind of ranch?”

“A horse breeder. The same guy you bought the mare’s and pony from.”

“Why would he want to go to work for us? We can’t pay as much as that rancher probably did?”

“The son is old enough now that he’s coming into the ranching business and they have to cut back. I heard that she’s tired of working for the motel. Besides, we’d be providing housing, that’s worth something.”

“You handle it Mel, I have to work tomorrow.”

“Well?”

“I hired them. Her name is Maria and his is Rudolpho, Rudy. They will start moving in tomorrow.”

“I have to work again tomorrow.”

“Why?”

“Shift Super is off sick. Goes with the job.”

“But you’re the Manager.”

“The Manager who covers for absent Supervisors, Mel. There is some kind of virus going around; I have several people off sick.”

“What kind of virus?”

“Influenza. Don’t worry; I had my shot at work.”

“I’ll get the kids and me in for shots on Monday. I’d better make sure that Rudy and Maria get shots, too.”

“Do they speak English?”

“Ninth Generation Californians.”

“Yeah, but do they speak English?”

“Very well, but his Spanish is a little rusty.”

o

“The grounds look nice.”

“Rudy took care of the horses and mowed the lawn. Maria helped and the house is totally clean. We went to the doctor and got our flu shots. What’s new at the airport?”

“That Supervisor that was out with the flu? He died. I’ll have to promote someone to fill his slot. I don’t know what this virus is, but even some of the people who had the flu shots are out sick.”

“Maybe it’s that avian flu. What did they call it?”

“Atypical H5N1?”

“That’s it. Isn’t that a different vaccine?”

“I think so. You’d better call the doctor’s office back and check into it. We may need different vaccinations.”

“Do they even have a vaccine?”

“I think so, but I’m not sure. The French had something in 2005 and someone else was working on something. Could you go on the Internet and see about some of those disposable N-100 masks that 3M makes, just in case? We’re already wearing them at

work.”

“I sure will. And I’ll check with the doctor about a vaccine for atypical H5N1. Did I tell you that Rudy was a Combat Lifesaver in the Army? If you can’t get to the doctor’s office, I believe he could give you a flu shot.”

“Ask him to go over our first aid preparations and recommend any upgrades. Work with the doctor to get the prescriptions for whatever he recommends and add that to the stuff in the shelter.”

“Good idea. He also took the EMT-1 course when he got out of the Army, but couldn’t find a job with an ambulance company. He said he always wanted to be a Paramedic, but had to support his family and couldn’t manage.”

A Combat Lifesaver is taught to establish IV’s and give shots. It is essentially advanced first aid until a hospital corpsman or combat medic is available. EMT-1 or EMT-B, depending on the state, reinforces that training. Also known as EMT-B, for Basic, it is the basic level for professional rescuers; this is the level of emergency medical training for most firefighters. EMT’s can perform first aid, splinting, bandaging, CPR, Emergency Childbirth, assist patients with some medications, and are trained in the use of the AED (Automated External Defibrillator). EMT-1’s can find employment with private ambulance providers, hospital emergency rooms as ER Techs, and other private and public rescue and first aid providers.

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“Rudy has your H5N1 shot, Jon. We did a lot of shopping today and the doctor was cooperative when he reviewed Rudy’s training. He says the Rudy should have gone ahead with Paramedic training. Anyway, we picked up the N-100 masks, a full case, an AED, lactated Ringer’s, D5W, D5NS, normal saline and IV sets. He also prescribed Cipro and Keflex. Rudy suggested a much better Trauma kit and I ordered it. It includes oxygen equipment and we picked up a bottle of O₂. We added a nebulizer and got a prescription filled for Albuterol Sulfate because the doctor says that Angie is a borderline Asthmatic. He also prescribed Epi-pens and an inhaler.”

“I didn’t realize she had a problem.”

“She’s had a couple of asthma attacks, but nothing serious so far. He said that it was probably prudent to keep minimal supplies for an emergency in view of the spread of the avian flu virus. It would be better to treat her at home than risk her getting the virus in an emergency room.”

“They’ve established, human-to-human transmissions?”

“Apparently so, yes.”

“Have Rudy come give me my shot and ask him to bring Maria, I haven’t had a chance to meet them yet.”

“Hi, I’m Rudy and this is my wife Maria. I understand you want your avian flu shot?”

“I’m pleased to finally meet both of you. I don’t want the shot, but I believe it is probably necessary. I understand that you were interested in becoming a Paramedic. Why didn’t you?”

“I have a family to support.”

“Still interested in taking the training?”

“Sure, but do you have any idea how much is involved?”

“I checked it out on the internet from work, so I have a basic idea, yes. Are you on the National Registry for EMTs?”

“Yes, I passed the test and have taken the continuation courses.”

“Still interested in becoming a Paramedic?”

“Oh, man, you have no idea.”

“Actually I do have an idea. Can you get into the course?”

“I passed the entrance exam and am enrolled in the Paramedic prep course at West-Med College. They’re accredited for the Paramedic training and I’ve looked into financial assistance.”

“Any financial assistance you can’t get, Mel and I will provide.”

“Thank you. Ready for the shot?”

“No.”

“Good, I’m done.”

“You’re not bad at that.”

“Jon, are you sure?”

“Mel, it sure couldn’t hurt to have a trained Paramedic living here and Rudy said he was looking into financial assistance. Especially since you’ve said that Angie is asthmatic.”

“Oh, good. I already discussed it with Maria.”

“There is only one problem that I can see.”

“What is that, Jon?”

“Time. The course takes a full year.”

“I thought that you were talking about the fact that if Rudy finishes the course, he’ll be gone most of the time.”

“Rudy, what does a Paramedic work, 24 on and 48 off?”

“Something like that I think.”

“In that case, you’ll be here more than there. Are you willing to continue living here if you become a Paramedic?”

“Maria works for you and I get housing. Why wouldn’t I be?”

“So, if we can manage to survive until the fall of 2009, we’ll have a trained medical person available $\frac{2}{3}$ of the time?”

“I’ll work very hard at the school.”

“As you learn to do new things and use additional drugs and equipment, let us know and we’ll try to update what we have. Did Mel give you a key and show you how to access the shelter?”

“Yes she did. Pretty nice shelter, are you expecting World War III?”

“I don’t know what I’m expecting, the odds favor the prepared person, wouldn’t you say?”

“It works for me.”

◦

Typically Paramedic training consisted of:

Lecture/lab 429 hours

Hospital based clinical 160 hours

Field Internship 480 hours

Graduates from the Paramedic training received 32 units of college credit and are eligible for California Licensure after successful completion of the National Registry Examination.

The typical fees were:

- \$ 885 Books and Materials
- \$ 848 College Tuition
- \$ 125 Local Accreditation
- \$ 180 State License
- \$ 42 Fingerprints, Department of Justice processing
- \$ 50 National Registry Application

It took all of your time from when you started until when you finished, about a year later. To be a doctor took a whole lot longer, up to 11 years. The only question in Jon's mind was would the disaster wait another year? The bad news was it was already happening. The avian flu was an epidemic and beginning to take on the proportions of a pandemic. Had they not gotten vaccinated when they did, they wouldn't have been able to. Whether the vaccine worked remained to be seen. It might depend on how much the virus mutated.

The 1918 Spanish Flu Pandemic killed ½ million Americans and up 50 million worldwide, depending on what you read. This was 2008 and we had vaccines for things like aH5N1 (a = atypical). Working in an International airport wasn't the best choice for occupations, either. The US had some things working in its favor: 1) a limited embargo of air flight, especially from the Far East; 2) an expanding diplomatic dispute among China, Taiwan and Japan over oil and gas; and, 3) the reemergence of the dispute in the Kashmir between India and Pakistan.

Have you flown? Did they lose your luggage? Baggage handling has always been a problem. More recently, vis-à-vis 21st Century, it had gotten worse. Airlines and airports tried everything including automated baggage handling. Nothing seemed to work until several airlines were in bankruptcy at the same time. The solution lay in contracting out the baggage handling to a 3rd party contractor who was compensated for the number of pieces of properly handled baggage and penalized for improperly handled baggage. Say you handle 900,000 pieces of luggage and 890,000 are correctly handled. That means that 10,000 pieces were mishandled and the number is deducted from 890,000 and you get paid for 880,000. The system has a build in penalty and basically every mishandled piece of luggage costs you double.

Jon was the manager of the 3rd party company with the contract at SJC and he earned every dime. In addition to his nominal salary, he got a percentage of the net billings. The more his people screwed the pooch, the less he earned, regardless of how hard he worked. No wonder LAX wanted to hire him, they were considering the same system. The system was a stopgap measure brought on first by the bankruptcies and secondly by the absence of personnel. It really proved its worth when the avian flu hit. One of the most successful automated baggage handling systems, according to some, is the system at Denver.

A Home of Their Own – Chapter 9

There was an unspoken advantage of Rudy being in training, he occasionally brought his work home. It was truly amazing how many things got misplaced in hospitals, sometimes even the patients. Some things were more carefully controlled than others, narcotics being a prime example of something difficult to access. Antibiotics weren't quite as bad. The same could be said for things like IV sets, etc. Most floors/wards had a drug cart that was kept locked and periodically restocked by the pharmacy. Some items were special order only and some items had legs. Ever been in a hospital where they couldn't start an IV because they couldn't find an IV set? I have, you wait until they come up with one.

Most active duty Paramedics bring in their drug box and the hospital or whatever restocks it. Everything is properly accounted for. In the hospital, the same theory is practiced a nurse issues a drug or an item to a patient and the inventory of the drug cart is adjusted accordingly. But how many times during an emergency does something come out of a drug cart and not get charged to the patient, etc.? "Wait to die please; I can't get the epi until I do the paperwork!" How many things are dispensed during the average day in the average hospital? More than two, that's for sure. How many IV sets does the average patient use during a hospital stay? I use about 3 every 2 days, sometimes more. My veins get tired of being stuck and disappear. After 8 days, they're almost out of places to establish an IV. If they strap me in, that guarantees they'll have to establish new IVs. They come out when I work my way out of the restraints. Airways? Knock me out or I'll pull them out, take your pick. If I need to go to the toilet and the nurse doesn't answer the bell, I'm off and running. They have names for patients like me, but I can't repeat them here.

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When does Mommy become Mom and Daddy become Dad? Somewhere between ages 4-6 and it depends upon the circumstances. Hurt might still be Mommy or Daddy; but otherwise, it's Mom and Dad. Does a child the age that Angelina was when her Grandma and Aunt died really understand death? I really doubt it although they might know the words die or death. During the midst of a pandemic when their fellow classmates don't return to school, they may begin to suspect, but surely not in Kindergarten.

"I think it's time to get Angelina a pet to take care of."

"What did you have in mind, she has a pony?"

"I had in mind a dog."

"What kind of dog?"

"German Shepherd."

“She’ll love it, no more spankings.”

“Is it ok?”

“Yes, but I can guess who is going to get to train the dog.”

“Housebreaking will be up to you and Maria. Once the dog is old enough, we’ll take him for professional training.”

“Is that why you put in hardwood and tiles floors?”

“I can’t say it wasn’t in the back of my mind. Wouldn’t you feel better having a dog to guard the property?”

“I didn’t say no, Jon. Do you want to get the puppy or shall I?”

“I don’t have a lot of time lately.”

“Fine, purebred or mutt?”

“Need you ask?”

“Ok, one purebred German Shepherd coming up. I’ll check around for a reputable breeder.”

“What is his name, Mom?”

“He doesn’t have a name, you get to pick one.”

“Can I pick Rusty?”

“May I pick Rusty?”

“It’s ok with me, Mom.”

“Angie, I was correcting you. You should have asked, ‘May I pick Rusty?’”

“Oh. Come on Rusty.”

“Look Mom, he knows his name.”

“Yes, dear, I see.”

“Very funny Mrs. Jones.”

“He would have come if she called him Mutt, but why burst her bubble?”

“Mr. Jones and you have a lot of money, don’t you?”

“Actually no, Maria. His parents died a number of years ago and he just recently got his inheritance. My mother and sister were killed in a car accident on Christmas Day 2006. We had the land and used the estates to build the home. Jon did most of the work on the shelter himself.”

“That accident? I remember. I’m sorry.”

“Thank you. That’s why they call them accidents I suppose. The other car’s brakes failed and he slammed into them.”

“Rudy said his brakes failed because he did his own work on that car and didn’t properly bleed the brakes.”

“Wouldn’t have made any difference, he didn’t have insurance.”

“I suppose. What are you doing for Christmas this year?”

“Probably just staying home. What are you going to do?”

“We’re going to Tracy to have dinner with Rudy’s parents.”

“Jon’s only living relative is his brother, Rob and he lives in Nebraska.”

“Such a big house for such a small family.”

“We waited a long time and when we could finally build it, we went 1st class, Maria.”

“You have the best of everything.”

“We lived in that trailer until we moved into here.”

“I’m done. Is it ok if I leave?”

“Vaya con Dios.”

¿Usted habla español?

“Poco, sí.”

“Vaya con Dios.”

“Gracias.”

“De nada.”

o

“What’s his name?”

“Rusty.”

“As in Rin Tin Tin, Rusty?”

“Yes.”

li li ou li li li ou li li ou

*Oh wagon trains rollin’ along they fade from my visions and in time will be gone
I see an eagle in space my people will follow oh oh a vanishing race*

li li ou li li li ou li li ou

*An Indian brave rolled along one day on a lonely mountain trail
And he gazed below with a heart of woe where the prairie schooners sail
A vision formed like a mortal storm in the dust of the wagon train
A vanishing race appeared in space and he sang his sad refrain
li li ou li li li ou li li ou
Oh wagon trains rollin’ along...*

*Oh now great spirits on high please spare them the sorrow you show to my eye oh oh
Now my blankets are roll and I ride to the valley of the brave Navajo oh oh*

li li ou li li li ou li li ou

*And I ride to the valley of the brave Navajo oh oh
Oh oh a vanishing Navajo oh the vanishing Navajo
li li ou li li li ou li li ou*

That as close as I can come to the song sung on *The Adventures of Rin Tin Tin*. Song by Johnny Cash.

As I recall, the words were:

*Navajo Warriors sing a song of a vanishing race
The Mighty Navajo...*

Every time I hear the name Rin Tin Tin, I think of Lt. Rip Masters singing that song. Rusty believed Peter, Paul and Mary and got a hammer; he is a carpenter now. James B. Brown died in 1992.

The first *Rin Tin Tin*, who along with his heirs starred in numerous films and television series, was discovered during World War I, September 15, 1918, by US Air Corporal Lee Duncan and his battalion in Lorraine, France. At a bombed out dog kennel, Duncan

found a mother Shepherd Dog and her scrawny litter of five pups. Duncan chose two of the dogs, a male and female, while members of his group took the mother and the others back to camp. The only survivors over the next few months were the two pups Duncan had claimed, naming them *Rin Tin Tin* and *Nannette* after tiny French puppets the French children would give to the American soldiers for good luck. When the war ended, Duncan made special arrangements to take his pups back to his home in Los Angeles, but during the Atlantic crossing, *Nannette* became ill and died, shortly after arriving in America. In 1922, Duncan and *Rin Tin Tin* attended an LA dog show, with *Rinty* performing for the crowd by jumping 13½ feet. Following the show, producer Darrell Zanuck asked Duncan if he could try out his new *moving pictures* camera on the dog and paid \$350 to film *Rinty* in action.

Contacting every studio in Hollywood with a *Rin Tin Tin*-starring script *Where The North Begins*, Duncan unexpectedly stumbled onto a low-budget, Warner Bros (Vitaphone) film crew having difficulty shooting an exterior scene with a wolf. Duncan quickly approached the director and told them that *Rinty* could do the scene in one take. True to his word, Duncan's 'wonder' dog did the scene in one take and both were hired for the entire shoot of *Man From Hells River*. The film was a hit and *Rin Tin Tin* was a sensation, making 26 pictures for Warner's while starring in his own live 1930's radio show *The Wonder Dog*. At the peak of his popularity, Warner's maintained 18 trained stand-ins to reduce any stress on their dog star, while providing *Rinty* with a private chef who prepared daily lunches of tenderloin steak (consumed as live classical music was played to help ease the dog's digestion.) *Rin Tin Tin* died in 1932 at the age of 16, returned to his birthplace in France, and interred in *The Cimetière des Chiens (et Autres Animaux Exotiques)* in the suburb of Asnieres. Today, *Rin Tin Tin's* 103-year continuous bloodline carries on at a Texas kennel, where a litter of 8-11 pups are born each year.

It filled the page and you had to read something while Rudy was in school.

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"John Edwards, I'm not a bit surprised."

"He'd better get an official taster."

"Why?"

"Hillary is Vice President. Everyone knows how badly Bill wants his job back."

"How are you doing Rudy?"

"So far, so good. I'll start field internship soon."

"Have you been keeping tabs on our medical supplies?"

“I changed a few things.”

“Anything special?”

“Nothing new, if that’s what you mean. More like I’ve been swapping things out. Keeping the stuff in the shelter replaced with brand spanking new stuff with a longer expiration date. The stuff I’m pulling out is still good and will be used up pretty fast so the expiration date won’t be a problem.”

“We had fairly new things.”

“These are slightly newer. When I finish my training, I’ll talk to a doctor about certain prescriptions.”

“Let me know, Mel and I will pay for them.”

“What do you think of the trouble between China, Taiwan and Japan?”

“I hope the US doesn’t get dragged into it should it turn into a war.”

“The pandemic is still going strong. It must have mutated, some of the people getting sick had been vaccinated.”

“We still have a lot of people out.”

“Still? How long has it been?”

“Several months. I understand that you’re going to Tracy for Christmas?”

“We went to Maria’s parents on Thanksgiving. I called the farrier to have him look at the horses feet.”

“Anything wrong with them?”

“No, trim and reshoe.”

“How often do we do that?”

“Every 4-6 weeks, is what is recommended. It could be worse, you could have put in a wire fence or they could be walking on concrete all of the time. New York City reshoes their police horses every 7 weeks. We might get by with 8, but we’ll let the farrier and the Vet decide. Normally, I’d have time to keep them trimmed a little better. Even then, the interval would be the same, probably about 8 weeks. I thought you were raised on a farm.”

"I was, Rudy, but dad always handled calling the vet and the farrier. When I got out of high school, I went into the Air Force and when I got out, stayed in California. Then I met Mel and we eventually got married."

"How long have you been married?"

"Since late May, 2002. It was just after Angelina was born."

"Had to make sure the baby was ok before you tied the knot?"

"Not at all. I proposed, but Mel didn't accept until after Angelina was born."

"Sounds pretty strange to me."

"I have no idea."

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"Mel, why did you wait until after Angelina was born to accept my proposal?"

"No particular reason. I wanted to make sure the baby was ok before I hamstrung you is all. If you had wanted a boy and I had a girl, maybe you would have blamed me."

"The father determines the sex of the child."

"Still, I just took my time making up my mind. Why all the questions?"

"It's nothing; Rudy and I were visiting is all."

"Speaking of which, I think you ought to buy Rudy a M1A rifle."

"As it is, I don't get time enough to shoot mine."

"Maybe if you have someone to shoot with, that would change."

"I'll have to go to Reno to get the magazines."

"Is that why you agreed so quickly to go to Reno before?"

"It had something to do with it. You still can't have 20-round magazines in California even though the AWB sunset in 2004."

"Why?"

A Home of Their Own – Chapter 10

“A Democrat majority in the House and Senate and John Edwards as President? Plan on buying everything you think you might want while you can still get it.”

“Fine, I’ll get extra Browning Hi-Power magazines and plenty of the 20-round mags for the M1A. I call the dealer and have him order a M1A Super Match rifle and I stop tomorrow night to fill out the paperwork and pay for the gun. Rudy can have my standard model. When do you want to go to Reno?”

“How about this weekend?”

“That’s fine. Talk to Maria and ask her if she can baby sit Angie. I don’t want to drag her to Reno just yet. She’ll want to know all about the painted ladies and I wouldn’t know what to say.”

“Would you mind demonstrating what you do with one of them if she picked you up?”

o

“I never would have imagined.”

“I just did what you said. I imagined you were one of those women.”

“Maybe we can do that once in a while.”

“That’s entirely up to you, Mel.”

That weekend in Reno, Jon learned that Mec-Gar made a flush-fitting 15-round magazine for the Browning Hi-power. He bought 10. He also bought 31 of the 20-round magazines for the M1A and 10 cases of M80 ball. In addition he purchased 9 additional SS 30-round magazines for the SS Mini-14. This gave him 10 30-round magazines for each of the Mini-14s. He bought another flashhider with bayonet lug and two bayonets. Rudy and he could each carry a 9mm pistol with their 7.62x51mm rifles. Jon had bought and paid for a second Browning and would pick it up when he picked up the rifle. Mel hit big on a slot and brought home \$25,000 in cash. Why does it seem that people who don’t need the money win while those of us who could really use the money don’t?

“What are you going to do with the money Mel?”

“Convert it into gold and silver Eagles.”

“Good idea. You never know when we might need it. How are we doing on money?”

“I have what we need plus the invisible \$1,000 in our checking account. We’re actually in good shape financially. We’re debt free, have money in the bank and another \$1,000

in a savings account to back up the invisible \$1,000. I've been mostly putting the rest into gold and silver every other month. With your take home over \$2,000 a week, we're better off now than at any time in our lives."

"Who would have thought that I'd be averaging \$160 grand a year?"

"Your take-home pay is \$1,914 before you hit the SSA limit and \$2,106 after. You probably average just at \$2,000 a week take-home."

"Isn't that what I said?"

"Yes, but it is lower until mid-July when you hit the wage limit."

"I can remember when we grossed way less than \$2,000 a month combined."

"Different times and many things cost less back then. Could you have imagined paying over \$4 a gallon for gas 10 years ago?"

"That M1A rifle cost the government about \$100 when they started building them in the 1950s."

"What are they now?"

"I've been able to get them for \$1,300 plus the tax and fees."

"What is so special about the rifle?"

"Nothing super special. It's 7.62x51mm NATO-caliber instead of 5.56x45mm NATO-caliber. The bullet weights about 3 times as much and it has more knockdown power. The advantage to the 5.56 is that the ammo is lighter and you can carry more. For a soldier lugging a heavy pack that means he can carry more ammo. The 7.62 caliber is good to 800-yards in the hands of a skilled marksman, the 5.56 about 500-yards. The downside is that it weighs about 1½ times as much as the 5.56 and has heavier recoil. The Mini-14s assemble and disassemble in a similar fashion to the M1A, so if you can handle one, it doesn't take much to adapt to the other."

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"I noticed that you only bought one additional 9mm pistol. What about Maria and me?"

"If you want them, we can get them. It will give us an excuse to make a run back to Reno and get more of the 15-round Mec-Gar magazines. I only bought 10 and I would think you'd want to carry the magazine in the weapon and 4 spares. I have the two of you set up to carry 9 spare 30-round .223 magazines plus the 30-round mag in your rifle."

“Carry it with what?”

“I can either get load bearing vests or ALICE gear. I personally prefer the ALICE gear.”

“How often can you purchase a pistol?”

“1 in 30 days.”

“Maria and I will get our own and I’ll pay for them. You can’t order the magazines?”

“They won’t ship them to California, one or both of us will have to go there and buy them.”

“I do that one day this coming week, give me the name of the store and I can call them and make sure they have them in stock. I’ll hop a plane and go get them.”

“I dug out the invoice for you; it had the phone number on it.”

Mel and Maria got the study guide, spend some time studying and bought the pistols. The next day Mel flew to Reno and picked up 18 of the magazines, figuring more was better. Now they would each have 6 spares plus the mag in the pistol. They would also have 10-round mags for the pistols they bought, giving them an extra, albeit smaller, backup.

Jon had some other things he wanted but there was no way he could get them in California, at least not legally. He had read an article in a gun mag about the Surefire M4-FA and they sounded like the ideal accessory in a tough situation. California outlawed NFA items except for peace officers. He figured that where there is a will, there must be a way. The companion expression is easier said than done. Nebraska was like many states in the Midwest and outlawed NFA items except for LEOs so Rob couldn’t help if out. Morgan Hill is in Santa Clara County.

Jon wanted 2 FA762S suppressors for the M1A rifles. He spent weeks thinking about that and finally remembered a fella in his unit whose home of record was Reno. A half of a dozen phone calls put him in touch with his friend. An hour’s discussion got the friend to be a strawman and purchase 2 of the suppressors, for \$2,500 each. The MSRP on the suppressors was \$1,682 each, plus \$200 for the NFA tax stamp and who knew what else to actually make the purchase. The friend said it would be about 3 months and he’d need half the money up front.”

Those were the longest 3 months of Jon’s life. Finally one day a UPS package arrived, COD for a sum that equaled the balance, shipping charges and a COD fee. Mel paid for the delivery and left it lie on the dining room table.

“What did you order that could come in that small of a package and cost \$2,500 plus?”

“Open it up and look, Mel.”

“What the hell? Are these what I think they are?”

“What do you think they are?”

“Silencers.”

“That’s the slang term, Mel, but yes, they’re suppressors.”

“I’ll come visit you. Where do you think you’ll be, Folsom?”

“If I get caught, probably San Quentin.”

“Please put them away.”

“Sure. Why the objection? Those pistol mags you flew to Reno for would land you in nearly as much trouble.”

o

“The mares foaled; I had to call the vet, twice.”

“What did we get?”

“Two fillies.”

Mel’s protest was probably more motivated by fear of Jon getting caught violating the NFA than any California laws. The federal law says that if the state law prohibits possession, so does the federal law. By this time the gun cabinet in the shelter didn’t have room for many more firearms. They were up to 28 weapons if she counted right, not including the suppressors. 30 was probably a better total including the suppressors. Unfortunately, the Surefire adapter didn’t have the bayonet lug.

Having found a source for the very illegal suppressors, John began to think about those Browning Hi-Powers. He called his friend back and made a suggestion. The price this time was \$900, each. He ordered 4 plus 4 threaded barrels, another \$150 each. He sent a check for half, \$2,100 and began his wait all over again. This time he warned Mel to expect a package for \$2,100 plus in about 90 days. And this time Mel was less upset, how many times could they put him in prison? The answer was that it depended on whether the sentences were consecutive or concurrent.

“I passed the National Registry Exam, it is official.”

“Congratulations, Rudy. I have a few things to show you when you have time.”

“Sure, Jon. I’ll be working for the Santa Clara County Fire Department.”

“Good, close to home, huh?”

“Yeah, it should be nice. What was it that you wanted to show me?”

“Come to the shelter.”

“I went with ALICE gear, I hope you don’t mind. Ok here we go, first your new rifle.”

“M1A? Nice.”

“You have 21 20-round mags and one other accessory. Here you go.”

“Sheesh, it that what I think it is?”

“Oh, yeah. But wait, there’s more, here you go.”

“Nice gun the Browning Hi-Power. Where did you find one with a threaded barrel?”

“It’s an after-market barrel required for this.”

“A 9mm suppressor?”

“I also have an unsuppressed Mini-14 in stainless steel for Maria with 10 30-round magazines. Mel has the same as Maria.”

“Ammo?”

“Something over 10 cases of M80, but, I haven’t picked up any extra 5.56 ammo. I figure about 4 cases ought to be enough. I’m looking for some subsonic 9mm for the pistols.”

“I have those prescriptions for you.”

“Great. What did you get?”

“Two vials of morphine and 2 bottles of the tablets. We have everything other than that. A little here, a little there, you know.”

“I’ll order some 5.56, subsonic 9mm and some 12-gauge 00 buckshot. Have you ever gone through cabinets and checked out what we have?”

“I haven’t had time.”

“Check them out.”

“Five one year supplies of food?”

“I got that stuff when Mel’s mother and sister were still alive. I’ve kept it all updated. We have 2 kids so that should cover them.”

“Maria is expecting.”

“Congratulations, when did you find time?”

“You know.”

“Yes, I do, sorry for kidding. It’s going to take those fillies 4 years to grow up, right?”

“Yep.”

“Check with your former employer and pick out 2 more quarter horses.”

“Stock or racing?”

“Stock, about 4 years old, preferably bred.”

“Won’t you run out of room in the barn?”

“I put in the 14’ foaling stall, we shouldn’t.”

“Where did you get the suppressors?”

“A friend in Nevada got them for me.”

“What is the life on them?”

“The Surefires are good for 30,000 rounds. The 9mms about 5,000 rounds but I have replacement baffles.”

“No scope for the model 70?”

“Afraid not.”

“You ought to get a Leopold Mark 4 variable, 3.5-10x40mm LR/T and the .30-06 bullet drop compensator.”

“I’ll look into it, Rudy.”

“Been a long day, Jon. I’d better get home. Do you want me to take the weapons or leave them here?”

“Up to you but I’d leave the suppressors here. BTW, the 9mm magazines hold 15 rounds.”

o

Rudy hadn’t said anything about the cabinet full of guns and he obviously knew what a suppressor was and that Browning didn’t normally have threaded barrels. Neither had he said anything negative about the suppressors, which he left in the gun case. Jon generally had to get the measure of a man quickly and it appeared that he had correctly measured Rudy. Suppressors were illegal in California but mandatory in some European countries. High capacity magazines were illegal in California but legal in almost every other state. Jon thought that California had gone overboard on regulating firearms. And, Rudy was a veteran. Jon wasn’t going to lie to Rudy and at this point, the fat was in the fire and anyone who knew about guns didn’t leave loaded guns lying around. All firearms sold in California are sold with trigger or cable locks.

“Rudy brought two pistols and 2 rifles home last night.”

“Does it bother you having guns around, Maria?”

“Not especially but I should get someone to teach me how to handle them. Rudy put the weapons in the closet and the magazines in his sock drawer in the bedroom.”

“I’ll talk to Jon and we’ll schedule some time on a range. Rudy is a vet so he can teach you safe handling.”

“He showed me the safeties and how to clear the weapons. He said that you never stored magazines with weapons.”

“The firearms aren’t where a kid can get to them are they?”

“No. The pistols are on the top shelf of the closet and Rudy put the trigger locks on everything.”

“Good. Angie hasn’t shown any interest in guns but she’s a typical curious youngster.”

A Home of Their Own – Chapter 11

“Jon, seeing how you’ve given Rudy his guns, we should take time to explain about firearms to Angie.”

“I will sit her down this evening and discuss firearms. Thanks for bringing it up. You’re keeping the trigger locks on everything and storing the guns and ammo separately, right?”

“Jon, everything has the trigger or cable locks and magazines are put up separately. She a kid and kids are curious.”

“Right after supper before she gets her bath.”

“Did you give Rudy the suppressors?”

“Showed them to him but he left them in the gun cabinet in the shelter with ours.”

“Did you give him the high capacity magazines?”

“Yes, why?”

“You have a legal magazine for every weapon. Don’t you think it might be a good idea to give him the legal magazines too?”

“Good point.”

“Maria wants to learn to shoot the guns. I told her we could schedule some range time this weekend.”

“Right, I’ll have to change out the barrels on the Browning’s. I think it best to avoid questions. Rudy caught that right off.”

“Are those threaded barrels legal?”

“Sure, but they do raise questions. The H&K USP Tactical comes with a threaded barrel. We’ll practice with the rifles at a range in the mountains. I’ll pick up more muffs and ear plugs.”

“I thought that by now you would have purchased some of the M1911s.”

“Why? The .357 magnums have the same stopping power. But you raise a good point; I think we should practice failure to stop drills.”

“What is that?”

“Two to the body and one to the head.”

“I’m sorry that I asked.”

“I ordered special ammo to use with the suppressors in the pistols but I also have some ammo to carry in them for defensive purposes.”

“What is the special ammo?”

“Speer Gold Dot JHP bullets.”

“What about those bulletproof vests?”

“What about them? Cops wear those and unless I took a wrong turn somewhere the cops are on our side. I doubt you see many banditos with bulletproof vests.”

“I had a call from a salesman wanting to install a security system.”

“I had the house pre-wired, just in case. If you think we need one, go for it.”

“Rusty is still not trained so may we should do it.”

“Get a password that everyone can remember. And if you do install the system, make certain they put an anti-tamper switch on the telephone box.”

“Which company do you prefer?”

“ADT, Brinks any major. Check with the Sheriff’s station and see who they recommend.”

“Do you want a sensor on the shelter?”

“No.”

◦

February 2009...

“Rudy, do you carry a BOB in your car?”

“BOB?”

“Bug Out Bag.”

“No, only 2 gallons of gas and a set of jumper cables.”

“We need to assemble some BOBs. I’ve been considering the options and I think a fancy pack would do the trick. Plus each vehicle needs to have a 72-hour family emergency kit. I’ve been picking stuff up for a while and all we need to do is put it together.”

“What do you have?”

“Gerber Leatherman, Lifeboat ration, 4 packs of water, folding knife, fire starters, survival knife refill, compass, MRE toilet tissue, survival blankets, personal first aid kit, 5 gold Eagles, one box of 9mm, one Browning Hi-Power and 3-loaded magazines. The family packs have more water, MRE entrees, first aid kit and the assortment of stuff you see lying there.”

“More Browning’s?”

“I got in a rut. The ammo is defensive and the magazines are the 10-round legal variety. Did you ever think of getting a diesel vehicle?”

“I thought about a good used pickup, but I haven’t been on the job that long.”

“Find one and let me know. I’ll buy it for the acreage and you can drive it. Consider it part of your compensation for the work you do here. I’ll try and write it off and you’ll have to report the write off as income. When it’s written off, I’ll transfer it to you.”

“I found a pickup.”

“What did you find?”

“2006 Dodge Ram 2500 4×4 with 8’ box, towing package and the 5.9 liter Cummins turbo-diesel. Fairly low mileage but in great condition. I think the price might be a little high, but maybe you can talk them down.”

“Fine, let’s go check it out.”

“...and that’s my final offer. Did I tell you it was cash?”

“All the same to me. Any extras?”

“98-gallon cross bed fuel tank and a 12k Warn winch on the front.”

“Cash?”

“Cash.”

“Give us a day to add the extras.”

“Fine, Rudy will pick it up tomorrow. What time?”

“We don’t fill the auxiliary tank.”

“Figures.”

◦

“Mel, is everything topped off?”

“They aren’t scheduled to deliver propane for a month.”

“Could you get the propane and diesel topped off today or tomorrow?”

“Sure, why?”

“I’m darned if I know. I have a sinking feeling, but it isn’t anything I can put my finger on. How much longer before Maria has her baby?”

“About 2 months.”

“Why don’t you pick up some cloth diapers, diaper pail and the usual stuff you’d need for a baby? Did you save Angie and John’s baby things?”

“They packed and stored in the basement. What’s bothering you?”

“If I knew, you’d be the first to know, believe me. Fuel prices are up, the economy is in the toilet, that thing in the Far East is heating up and they’re getting a few residual cases of avian flu so you can take your pick.”

“Ok, I’ll make the calls. I thought... did you feel that?”

“Small one, maybe M3. I guess you can add earthquake to the list. What were you going to say?”

“I thought that things were settling down with China and Japan.”

“Maybe, and, maybe not. You can expect an order from Walton today or tomorrow, I added a one-year supply and updated the old stuff. I’ll be late getting home tonight from work, I have to pick up some things I ordered.”

“What did you order?”

“Additional ammo. We burned through some and I wanted to top that off too.”

“I don’t recall seeing you so worked up.”

“Could just be the fidgets. How is Angie doing in school?”

“Great. They’re going to the fire station on a field trip today.”

“One other thing. Ask the dealer if they can put in a 300-gallon gasoline farm tank.”

“You really are worried.”

“I guess. I’ll pick up some PRI-D and some PRI-G.”

Jon couldn’t put his finger on the nagging thought that was making him itch. Since Maria still had the gas-fueled car, they should have fuel for it. They had 3 diesel-fueled vehicles and a 2,000-gallon diesel tank. There were 2 5,000-gallon propane tanks. With the new order from Walton, he had 6 one-year deluxe food supplies. He had gone through all of the ammo over the weekend and decided on a minimum of 500-rounds per weapon and 10 times as much for the 2 M1As and 2 Mini-14s. They had enough of everything to cover them until they exhausted the generator fuel and then some. He’d added a SSB CB to Rudy’s pickup. Come Hell or high water, they were as prepared as a group of people could get.

The sole remaining question was, are you ever ready for a real emergency or disaster? You could prepare, but after that, it became a mindset. If there were ever a nuclear war, whom did you admit to the shelter? Would grumpy old Fred and Eleanor want to come? He’d added a couple more cots, just in case. If they had an earthquake, would it be like in 1984? Would an earthquake in the Far East or Alaska trigger a tsunami that sent a rushing wall of water rushing inland from the coast? What about that Cascadia Fault or the Hayward Fault? What about the Cascade volcano range? A man could worry himself to death and that’s why you prepared and stayed prepared.

◦

“Did you get everything you wanted?”

“Yes. Did you get the tanks topped off?”

“They filled the diesel and propane today. They’re delivering the 300-gallon tank, stand and gasoline tomorrow. The order from Walton didn’t come today, so maybe tomorrow.”

“When were you planning on grocery shopping?”

“The way you ask, I guess tomorrow.”

“Good. Buy enough extra coffee to cover the amount of long-term stored food. Did Angie like the fire station?”

“She said she wanted to be a Paramedic like Rudy.”

“And when they go to another place, she’ll want to be something else. What is the situation with our bank account?”

“I was just about ready to buy some more coins. Tomorrow?”

“Yes, please.”

“Eat your dinner. I call Rudy and he can help you unload the truck after you eat.”

“They had a plane hijacked today.”

“It wasn’t on the news.”

“Might be too soon. When I left work, they were still negotiating, or so I heard.”

“Where did this guy want to go?”

“Cuba.”

“They’ll never let him out of the mental institution.”

“They brought the HRT into SFO and they’re trying to get the 747 to land there. I’m taking a day of vacation tomorrow; I can help you with the grocery shopping.”

“Really?”

“Yeah, use it or lose it.”

“How much vacation do you have accumulated?”

“6 weeks. Are we up-to-date on all of our shots?”

“Planning on a vacation?”

“Let’s say for the heck of it we are. Pick the most dangerous place on the earth to go, health wise, and we get shots to go there.”

“You really are worried.”

“Yes I am. It’s nothing I can put my finger on, but there is a nagging suspicion bouncing around in my head that we in for a spell of serious trouble.”

“Doctors are reluctant to give certain shots.”

“Fine, we’ll lie. And, we’ll get the necessary health certificates just like we are planning to go overseas. I’m talking about the full spectrum here, smallpox, yellow fever, DPT, mumps, measles, pneumonia, tetanus, etc. I’ll suggest the same thing to Rudy. Because Maria’s expecting, I don’t know which shots she can take, but I’ll suggest that he get vaccine for her and the baby.”

“Rusty finished up his training today. He obeys several commands, just like a guard dog.”

“You’ll have to fill me in on Saturday. Well, I’m done eating, were you going to call Rudy?”

“I’ll do it now.”

“Hey Jon, ammo?”

“Filed in all of the empty spots.”

“World War III?”

“Could be.”

“You scare me when you talk like that.”

“Something is bothering me Rudy and I can’t figure it out. We’re going to get vaccinations just like we’re going overseas. I’d strongly suggest that you do the same and Maria too. Whatever she can’t take, you should get the vaccine for when she delivers the baby.”

“There are a lot of vaccinations that they won’t give you.”

“They will if you tell them you’re going overseas and name the correct country. You have to lie, to get them, but I’m not above lying when necessary. I’ll be around tomorrow; I’m taking the day off. Did you hear about the hijacking?”

“Spectacular crash.”

“Where and when?”

“SFO, about 30 minutes ago. The reporters were speculating that he shot the pilot and copilot just as they were making their final approach.”

“Damn, that was a 747-400, 416 passengers plus the flight crew of 16.”

“Don’t they have 3 people on the flight deck?”

“Not the upgraded 400 series, no, pilot and copilot only. 14 flight attendants.”

A Home of Their Own – Chapter 12

“But how? Don’t they have air marshals?”

“A flight attendant reported that he overpowered one air marshal with a syringe initially thought to be filled with insulin, but later turned out to be a toxin. He took that air marshal’s weapon and shot the second one. That should have been the end of it. The door to the flight deck was locked from the inside. Somehow, he gained access to the flight deck and control over the flight crew. The aircraft had first squawked the emergency code, 7700, and later the hijacking code, 7500, on their transponder before he got in. Codes 0000, 4000, and 7777 are exclusively reserved for military use. The pilot can set the transponder to broadcast code 7600, indicating to the air traffic controller that the aircraft’s communications radios have failed. Code 7700 indicates an emergency, and code 7500 indicates a hijacking.”

“432 people, wow.”

“Fly the unfriendly skies.”

“Not anymore, I won’t.”

o

“Why do we want 30 cans of coffee?”

“It comes 6 to the tray and I got 5 trays by accident. I meant to get 6.”

“Those are 57 ounce cans.”

“It says they make 80 more cups. That should do for a while.”

“We have 12 cans at home.”

“Really? I’ll get 6 more. Did you get a flat of tissue?”

“Where are you going to store it?”

“In the barn? It doesn’t rust.”

“100# of salt? 300# of flour? 100# of sugar? 150# of pinto beans and 150# of rice? 36# of Crisco? I don’t even like pinto beans.”

“Maria uses a lot of them and you like her cooking.”

“Yeah, huh? Get another 50# of beans and rice.”

“We’ll be eating beans and rice until the end of time.”

“Very possibly. Did you notice that they raised the threat level up to orange in New York and yellow everywhere else?”

“When did they do that?”

“Overnight. There is no good way to check on the DEFCON level, they don’t announce it.”

“Get six boxes of the brownie mix and 12 bags of the pancake mix. We’d better load up on syrup too.”

“Beginning to believe?”

“I believe that you may be alarmed over nothing, but it can’t hurt to have extra treats for everyone.”

“Did you feel that?”

“M3 again?”

“Seems like. I think that’s enough. We may not need to come back for several weeks.”

“Can you explain something to me?”

“I can try.”

“Why did you buy so much hay that you had to stack it around the barn?”

“I got the idea from a survivalist novel. The hay would serve to absorb radiation and protect the horses in the event of a nuclear attack. Besides, they have to eat. Did you get potatoes?”

“No more room.”

“Ok, we pay for this load and you can watch the pickup while I go back in for the spuds.”

“There are a lot of people shopping today and they seem to be buying more than usual.”

“Maybe that means that I’m not the only one worried.”

“Look, that fella there has a half box of cigarettes.”

“There are 30 cartons to the half box, that’s about \$900 worth of smokes. Everyone does seem to be stocking up. Look, Mel, why don’t you run these two carts through and

I'll go get the potatoes now before they're all gone. I'll be back before you finish checking out."

"Sure."

"I thought you got lost."

"They just put out more packages of the 12% ground beef. I grabbed some of those and some extra bacon plus 10 bags of spuds. Am I too late?"

"Perfect timing."

"\$823.38. Check?"

"Cash."

"Whew, I was afraid that they were going to try and limit us."

"The guy with the smokes had to put back 28 cartons."

"He'll probably go to a cigarette store and buy the house brand."

"You never smoked?"

"I tried it in the Air Force. It left a bad taste in my mouth, so I quit."

"Probably paid for those guns you bought."

"I never thought about it, but you're probably right. If a guy smoked a carton a week, it would cost him \$1,560 a year for cigarettes. That would pay for a M1A rifle."

"Is this all going to fit?"

"It will be tight, but we can fill the back of the cab."

o

"Rudy, will you give me a hand getting this stuff put away?"

"Buy out the store?"

"Not hardly, no. Lots of people were shopping today. They had checkers on every lane. The extra toilet paper can go in the barn. The rest of the stuff can go into the shelter."

"Forty-two cans of coffee? Feeling deprived of caffeine?"

“Wouldn’t want to run out. Mel sent me back for more beans and rice.”

“Where are you going to put everything?”

“For now, just stack it. Did they bring the tank and gas?”

“It’s down by the barn.”

“Anchored?”

“They used some kind of screw in anchor. Seems solid.”

“That’s the last of it. Did you get the vaccinations?”

“This morning.”

“Yeah, we did too. The doctor thought we were nuts.”

“He told me that I should know better.”

“What about Maria?”

“I have the vaccines.”

“Jon, Rudy, come quick!”

“What up?”

“Look.”

This is an Emergency Action Notification. All broadcast stations and cable systems shall transmit this Emergency Action Notification Message. This station has interrupted its regular programming at the request of the White House to participate in the Emergency Alert System.

During this emergency, most stations will remain on the air providing news and information to the public in assigned areas. This is KNTV. We will continue to serve the Greater San Jose area. If you are not in this Local Area, you should tune to stations providing news and information for your Local Area. You are listening to the Emergency Alert System serving the greater San Jose area.

Do not use your telephone. The telephone lines should be kept open for emergency use. The Emergency Alert System has been activated.

“Everyone into the shelter, you can watch the message from there. I’ll go after Fred and Eleanor. Rudy, block the barn doors with the extra hay and get into the shelter.”

The North American Aerospace Defense Command at Colorado Springs has detected incoming missiles. Take cover immediately. Stay tuned to your local station for further instructions.

“So much for their 426 page National Response Plan. Take cover and stay turned? Stay tuned to what?”

“Was that an earthquake?”

“I really don’t believe so, no. Help me connect the air filter.”

“I’ve got to go.”

“Go where, Rudy?”

“I have to report to the fire station.”

“Right. Give them a call and check first.”

“The line’s dead.”

“And the generator just kicked in. Get you anything Fred?”

“I don’t suppose you’d happen to have a beer would you?”

“Fred!”

“Honey, it’s the end of the world. What difference does it make?”

“In the refrigerator Fred.”

“A six-pack?”

“Afraid that’s all there is.”

“I’ll take a coke.”

“Rudy, do you know how to operate the CD V-717?”

“No I don’t.”

“I’ll get it. Hmm, we have quite a bit of wind. The CD V-717 is climbing. We can expect up to 3,000 R/hr if they hit San Jose and 900 R/hr if they hit San Francisco.

“Can you enlighten me, please?”

"I can tell you what the effects of a 1mT surface burst are assuming a wind speed of 15mph, a wind direction of due east and a time frame of 7 days:

3,000 Rem

Distance: 30 miles

Much more than a lethal dose of radiation. Death can occur within hours of exposure. About 10 years will need to pass before levels of radioactivity in this area drop low enough to be considered safe, by US peacetime standards.

900 Rem

Distance: 90 miles

A lethal dose of radiation. Death occurs from two to fourteen days.

300 Rem

Distance: 160 miles

Causes extensive internal damage, including harm to nerve cells and the cells that line the digestive tract, and results in a loss of white blood cells. Temporary hair loss is another result.

90 Rem

Distance: 250 miles

Causes a temporary decrease in white blood cells, although there are no immediate harmful effects. Two to three years will need to pass before radioactivity levels in this area drop low enough to be considered safe, by US peacetime standards.

Radius of destructive circle: 1.7 miles

12 pounds per square inch

At the center lies a crater 200 feet deep and 1000 feet in diameter. The rim of this crater is 1,000 feet wide and is composed of highly radioactive soil and debris. Nothing recognizable remains within about 3,200 feet (0.6 miles) from the center, except, perhaps, the remains of some buildings' foundations. At 1.7 miles, only some of the strongest buildings – those made of reinforced, poured concrete – are still standing. Ninety-eight percent of the population in this area is dead.

Radius: 2.7 miles

5 psi

Virtually everything is destroyed between the 12 and 5-psi rings. The walls of typical multi-story buildings, including apartment buildings, have been completely blown out. The bare, structural skeletons of more and more buildings rise above the debris as you approach the 5-psi ring. Single-family residences within this area have been completely blown away – only their foundations remain. Fifty percent of the population between the 12 and 5-psi rings are dead. Forty percent are injured.

Radius: 4.7 miles
2 psi

Any single-family residences that have not been completely destroyed are heavily damaged. The windows of office buildings have been blown away, as have some of their walls. The contents of these buildings' upper floors, including the people who were working there, are scattered on the street. A substantial amount of debris clutters the entire area. Five percent of the population between the 5 and 2-psi rings are dead. Forty-five percent are injured.

Radius: 7.4 miles
1 psi

Residences are moderately damaged. Commercial buildings have sustained minimal damage. Twenty-five percent of the population between the 2 and 1-psi rings are injured, mainly by flying glass and debris. Many others have been injured from thermal radiation – the heat generated by the blast. The remaining seventy-five percent are unhurt.”

“Then our home is unhurt?”

“Most likely, Mel. The radiation will have to die down to a minimum of 104mR/hr before we can exit the shelter for any length of time. 7 hours after it peaks we'll be at 10%, at 49 hours, 1% and at 343 hours, 0.1%. Assuming we peak at 3,000R/hr that would be 3 R/hr after 2 weeks and 300 R/hr after 100 days. The maximum daily exposure limit is 2.5 R, so we could only be outside 8 hours a day. If they hit San Francisco instead of San Jose, we would be out of the shelter full time in about 100 days.”

“I thought they said you only had to be in a shelter for a couple of weeks, Jon.”

“If you were a couple of hundred miles from where the weapon set off, that would be correct.”

“Who did it?”

“I can guess, but I don't know. Glad we went shopping today, Mel?”

“This isn't very big, Jon.” Fred observed.

A Home of Their Own – Chapter 13

“Fred, it’s 324ft². We have 6 adults and 2 children, so let’s say 7 adults. That’s 46ft² apiece. The Swiss standard is about 6ft² per person and Utah Shelter Systems where I got the air filter allows 10ft² per person.”

“Where do we sleep?”

“We have cots. The shower cabinet in the far corner is the stool and the one next to it is the shower. There is a pull privacy curtain to allow you to dress and undress.”

“We didn’t bring any clothes.”

“Mel and I bought some cotton jumpsuits that are easy to care for. There are other clothes we can dig out when needed.”

“Anyone want coffee? We seem to have plenty, 54 cans.”

“Please.”

o

“Well crap. See what happens when I finally take a day off? I guess I should have gone to work today.”

“I just glad that school had let out. We would have been pressed to go after Angie.”

“We would have had plenty of time, Mel, 10 minutes each way.”

“It’s plain to see you’ve never picked her up at school.”

“Beijing is 16 hours ahead of us. We’re GMT -8 and they are GMT +8.”

“Figure it was the Chinese?”

“I doubt it was Pakistan or India. North Korea’s nuclear program isn’t that advanced. If China decided to take on Taiwan, they may have made a preemptive strike.”

“Wouldn’t have done them any good would it?”

“With our satellites, we have about 25 minutes advance warning. So no, it wouldn’t. We could retaliate in very few minutes and even if we lost all of our land systems, we still have up to 2,688 warheads on boomers and at any given time, I’d guess that half of them are deployed. One boomer could pretty much wipe out China, they carry 192 warheads.”

“Jon did you say 100 days?”

“Yes I did Fred.”

“I thought you said 100 hours. That’s a long time to be in these cramped quarters.”

“Feeling a little anxiety, Fred?”

“Maybe some, Rudy.”

“Here, take this.”

“What is it?”

“I suppose you could call it the hair of the dog.”

“Well, ok. Can I wash it down with the coke?”

“Anything is fine Fred.”

“Do we want to start supper?”

“I’ll help,” Eleanor volunteered. “Maria, you just take it easy.”

“What did you give Fred?” Jon asked quietly.

“A chill pill, freeze dried alcohol.”

“Huh?”

“Xanax. I give him about 30 minutes to conk out, possibly sooner.”

“Mel, why don’t you put on a movie for Angie?”

“You do it, I’m peeling potatoes.”

“I don’t know how to run the player.”

“Men!” Maria exclaimed. “I’ll do it Mel, Snow White?”

“It’s her favorite.”

“Which Dwarf are you Daddy?”

“Grumpy.” (Bashful, Doc, Dopey, Grumpy, Happy, Sleepy and Sneezzy)

o

“Fred is still sleeping.”

“Jon, after a while he will get accustomed to the Xanax and it won’t work so well. I can’t turn him into an addict just to keep him chilled out. Any suggestions?”

“We have some 50mg Benadryl capsules.”

“That will work for a while, I’ll switch him now before he gets dependent on the Xanax; most over-the-counter sleeping preps are Benadryl. Benadryl is no longer a prescription drug. Curiously, if you take it long enough, it doesn’t make you sleepy.”

“I also have some Atarax.”

“I think the Benadryl will do fine, for now.”

“Dispensing meds without a license, Jon?”

“Just trying to help Fred stay chilled.”

“Eleanor will handle that, she found my cast iron skillet.”

“Anything on the radios?”

“Yes, static. If the radiation level goes over the limit of your Geiger counters, how will you know what the peak level was?”

“It doesn’t matter. It turns out its logarithmic. I have some log graph paper and a copy of FM 3-3-1. I can calculate it and verify the calculation with the survey meter. All I need is 3 times, P, P+7 hours and P+49 hours. I should get a straight line sloping down to the right. I can extend it back to get the actual peak.”

“You picked one hell of a time to learn calculus.”

“It’s like the Richter Scale. What did that shaking feel like?”

“M6.”

“M6 = a 1mT explosion. Which should produce about 3,000R as a surface burst and less as an altitude burst.”

“Well Albert, what do you figure your half-life is if you keep talking like that?”

“Anyone want a beer?”

“Chicken.”

o

“Rudy, it isn’t as complicated as it sounds. I have the weather station so I know the wind direction and speed. We can plot when the meter goes off scale and when it comes back on scale. My best bet is figure on 100 days. But, we also have the meter to tell us what the level is.”

“Do you have enough dosimeters?”

“I have 10. I guess that makes 2 spares. They’re the CD V-742, 200R pocket dosimeters. I started out with the original 3 plus 2. I added 5 more and 5 more bottles of KIO₃.”

“Sounds good.”

“I wonder what Andrew Sheppard aka John Edwards is dreaming up now to steal our guns from us?”

“He has FEMA and they can’t handle disasters so maybe he’ll deputize them and get them to seize the firearms. He’ll use the military to clean up the country just as soon as they finish rebuilding the levees in New Orleans.”

“You’re in fine form. Do I detect cynicism?”

“In many ways, the cynical philosophy closely resembles the Buddhist philosophy. For example, both philosophies denied that pleasure was equal to or had anything to do with true happiness. Both philosophies also held as fundamental aspects of their ethics that one should neglect the body for the benefit of the soul. Finally, the common, crucial ingredient in both philosophies was the sufficiency of virtue for the attainment of happiness (enlightenment in Buddhism). I was being sarcastic. The true oxymoron is the term *honest politician*.”

“I thought it was CIA. Bart Mancuso said, *Central Intelligence Agency... Now, there’s a contradiction in terms*.”

And the seventh angel poured his bowl into the air, and a voice cried out from heaven, saying: “It is done.” A man with your responsibilities reading about the end of the world. And what’s this? *I am become Death, the Destroyer of Worlds*.

It is an ancient Hindu text, quoted by an American.

An American?

Mmm. He invented the atomic bomb, and was later accused of being a communist. (J. Robert Oppenheimer)

“The joint work of the scientists at Los Alamos resulted in the first nuclear explosion at Alamogordo on July 16, 1945, which Oppenheimer named “Trinity”, which he later said was after one of John Donne’s Holy Sonnets. According to the historian Gregg Herken, this naming could have been an allusion to Jean Tatlock (who had introduced him to Donne when they had dated in the 1930s), who had committed suicide a few months previously. He later recalled that while witnessing the explosion he thought of a verse from the Hindu text, the Bhagavad Gita:”

If the radiance of a thousand suns were to burst at once into the sky, that would be like the splendor of the mighty one...

“Years later he would explain that another verse had also entered his head at that time:”

We knew the world would not be the same. A few people laughed, a few people cried, most people were silent. I remembered the line from the Hindu scripture, the Bhagavad-Gita. Vishnu is trying to persuade the Prince that he should do his duty and to impress him takes on his multi-armed form and says, ‘I am become Death, the destroyer of worlds.’ I suppose we all thought that one way or another.

“So Captain Ramius was correct.”

“The way I see it, it has come full circle.”

“How do you mean?”

“We developed nuclear weapons and were the first to use them. Depending upon the outcome, we may also be the last, from the Alpha to the Omega. With China feuding with India and Pakistan over the Kashmir, don’t you think that China probably also made a first strike against them?”

“I hadn’t thought about it, but you could be right. That would mean that India and Pakistan would have retaliated against China.”

“Yeah, they blew the place up and we fused it into a pile of molten glass. So, where is Russia in all of this?”

“Probably sitting back and waiting to pick up the pieces, like the Middle East and Africa.”

“Do you figure Europe got involved?”

“Only the French and the United Kingdom had nukes. The French had the Brits outnumbered 2 to 1. But, I somehow doubt it. The problem would be the Germans. If France and Britain went at it, the Germans could come in and pick up the pieces in Europe.”

“And the Swiss are in their bomb shelters, just like we are?”

“I agree.”

◦

Rather than spend 100 days listening to first one and later two crying babies, I'll skip ahead to Day 101 when they determined it was safe to leave the shelter permanently. They only left briefly after 2 weeks to feed the animals, with Jon and Rudy taking turns. JP wasn't a baby anymore, but being cooped up in a hole in the ground for 3 months made him cranky.

◦

“It doesn't look a whole lot different.”

“It shouldn't. I don't know about you, but I didn't spend any time looking around when I came up to feed the horses.”

“You should have had a tunnel between the shelter and the barn.”

“No one was overexposed, so it didn't hurt anything.”

“We need to air that place out.”

“Can you imagine what it would have been like if I'd have bought the shelter from Utah Shelter Systems on the basis of 10ft² per person and only had a chemical toilet? I believe that they assume you'll be out in a few days, not a few weeks.”

“They sell a good air filter.”

“Our protection factor was about 10 raised to the 5th power. I put 84” of soil over the top of the shelter.”

“That's what, 1 in 100,000?”

“Basically, yes; 0.000001 of the surface level. In other words, normal background level or less. Not counting any Radon.”

“I don't believe that I'm going to be worrying about Radon. I've got to get to the fire-house and check in.”

“The house is musty.”

“Open it up and air it out.”

“Is it safe?”

“The radiation level is below 100mR, so it’s ok. We will probably do well to sleep in the shelter at night. But we should probably let it air out for 24 hours. Did you give Fred and Eleanor some food?”

“Yes, but they couldn’t carry much. We’ll have to take them more later.”

“Well, so much for a security system, it’s down because the phone lines are down.”

“How much propane did we use?”

“One tank. We will need to get it refilled when we can find someone to supply us. Being out of the shelter will increase our energy use and the second tank won’t last nearly as long. I guess that it’s a good thing we had the precious metals. Whatever we had in the bank won’t be available for a long time, if ever. Where are your firearms?”

“I left them in the shelter.”

“Get them, Mel. From now on until we know what the situation is around the area, you carry.”

“Will I need the suppressor too?”

“No, just your rifle and your ALICE gear with your pistol and all of the magazines.”

“I’m not about to wear it all of the time.”

“You’ll have to wear a pistol, get the other one from your BOB. You can hang the ALICE gear over a kitchen chair and put the rifle and pistol somewhere handy but out of Angie’s reach.”

“Come with me and bring some food for the house.”

“Tell me what you need and I’ll go and you can watch the kids.”

“We need meat, potatoes and a vegetable for supper plus a bag of the pancake mix and a bottle of syrup. Grab a pound of butter from the freezer too.”

“Bacon or sausage?”

“Sausage.”

“I’ll bring the bread too so we can have sandwiches or toast.”

“Why didn’t Rudy take his weapons?”

“He had his BOB Mel, he’s armed.”

“You better check on Maria while you’re at it. I don’t believe that she brought her fire-arms.”

A Home of Their Own – Chapter 14

“Maybe I can’t run the video machine, but I knew enough to bring a gun to a nuclear holocaust. Here, you keep my pistol and magazines while I do the chores. Rusty, Guard.”

“Maria, you need to keep you weapons nearby. You have yourself and Bobby to protect.”

“Roberto.”

“That’s what I said, Bobby. Do you need anything from the shelter?”

“No, I have everything we need for tonight, pollo con arroz.”

“Maria is having poyo with arrows for supper.”

“Pollo con arroz?”

“That’s what I said.”

“Chicken with rice.”

“Sounds good.”

“It is, if it’s made right. I had it a couple of times where the cook even put all of the gristle from the legs and wings into the dish.”

“On second thought, New York Strips and baked potatoes to celebrate our freedom?”

“Veggie?”

“Asparagus.”

“Did you remember everything?”

“I need to make a second trip, I’ll be right back. Rusty, Guard.”

“Why do you do that?”

“He’s trained to do it and when you use the term, he gets really intense.”

“Where’s my rifle and ALICE gear?”

“That’s what I couldn’t carry. Where is your BOB?”

“In the trunk of my car.”

“I’ll get it for you when I get back. I wonder if our vehicles will start?”

“Do you have spare parts if they don’t?”

“Many of everything that the dealers said could be damaged by EMP. Your car is older than my pickup so it’s more likely to start. I get it going first.”

Mel’s car was a 2004 Jetta Wagon with a turbocharged, 90-hp, 1.9-liter, SOHC, diesel 4-cylinder engine; Jon’s was a Dodge Ram Laramie 3500 4x4 Quad Cab 5.9-liter HO Cummins turbo-diesel; Rudy’s was a Dodge Ram SLT 2500 with a 5.9-liter HO Cummins turbo-diesel; and, Maria had a VW beetle, the original kind from the ‘50s or ‘60s. It took Jon a while to get the Jetta going. He had to air the tires, charge the battery and a few odds and ends. His pickup required a couple of parts, air, and a battery charge too. Maria’s car started with a jump and he aired her tires. By the time he finished, the steaks were thawed and cooking. Rudy didn’t make it back until late but he was back the same day. He’d looked like he’d seen a ghost or perhaps several. Maria had dinner waiting so he ate and went to bed.

“What did you see out there, Rudy?”

“Death with a capital D, Jon. Too damned many houses built on slabs without basements or a shelter. The houses survived but I saw a lot of bodies. The crew at the station rigged up a temporary shelter but they didn’t have enough protection and got too much radiation. I can only imagine that it’s worse to the north. There were lots of stalled cars on 101. I’d guess that people tried to evacuate with whatever fuel they had and either ran out of gas or the EMP got them.”

“Survivors?”

“A few, I got shot at once. If we can get the Squad to start, we’d better bring it here and I’ll run my activities from here.”

“See any Deputies or CHP?”

“No, but I could have missed them, the radios are dead.”

“I have some spare SSB CBs in the shelter; you should probably switch out your radio in your Dodge. Maybe you can check around and find a working Fire Department or police radio.”

“I not going out today without the M1A.”

“What me to ride shotgun? I have our wives set up with their weapons.”

“I noticed that, thanks. Will we be able to keep in touch with them?”

“It may depend on the ionizing radiation, but probably. We’ll check it out before we leave. Why don’t we use my pickup and do your radio tonight?”

“Suits me.”

“Mel I’m going to ride with Rudy today. We’ll be on USB on channel 20. Let me check out the CB in the house.”

“Rudy, do you hear me?”

“5 by 5.”

“Ok, our house radio works and Maria can stay with Mel. Mel, if anyone shows up, you call right away, we won’t be more than 10 minutes away.”

o

The wind had mostly been out of the west and Morgan Hill was south of San Jose and San Francisco. A Paramedic is a highly trained emergency medical technician, not a physician. In the immediate situation, there were finite limits on what Rudy could do. His experience as a Paramedic was limited; he hadn’t been out of school and on the job very long. Their priority was to locate survivors and access the people’s situation. At the station, the survey meter had been switched on but the batteries were dead. Those firemen knew what was happening and had done their best to protect themselves.

Rudy found a log kept by one of his co-workers. He skimmed it, shook his head and put it up; he couldn’t read any more. They’d gotten about 1,000R/hr in Morgan Hill. That coincided with Jon’s calculations and his paper-based estimation of the peak radiation level. Before the advent of computers, many calculations were made on log paper. Jon wasn’t familiar enough with Excel to set up the analysis on the laptop. The reference manual he had to the program had been in the house. After a few hours surveying the scene once again, they got the squad running and brought it back to the acreage. They found a few radios that still worked, enough to equip their vehicles and put one in Jon’s house. They got the antenna and coax from the fire station.

“I saw a propane delivery truck in town, do you suppose it has any fuel aboard?”

“We’ll check it out, we could use the propane. We could dump a full load into the tank we ran off of while we were underground.”

“Who do we pay for the propane?”

“Let’s get it and worry about that later. I made a list of the things I think we need to do.”

“Let’s hear it.”

“1) Locate survivors and access their situation; 2) render aid as possible; 3) locate fuel, food and medical supplies; and, 4) bury the bodies, if possible.”

“All the time making certain we don’t catch some infectious disease? And covering our six so some other survivors don’t decide he or she wants what we have and decide to take it? Fred is too old and disabled to be of much help, Rudy. I could arm him and he could help our wives keep an eye on the home place. I doubt he’d be up to helping us work around the community.”

“I can’t just leave my friends at the station to turn into mummies.”

“We can do something for them, of course. Others may end up turning into mummies. This has to be about helping the living and ourselves.”

“Did you ever complete the list of cities they hit?”

“From what I could tell on the ham radio, they must have used the list of the 100 largest cities in the US and worked their way down until they ran out of weapons. That doesn’t include whatever military targets they might have hit.”

“Was it China, for sure?”

“That was the general impression I got talking to other hams. I don’t plan on waiting for the military or FEMA to show up.”

“You’re saying we’re on our own?”

“The community is, Rudy. I have no idea of the population of the greater Bay Area. People in the East Bay may have survived if they found shelter. I’d probably chalk Oakland up as a total loss due to the fallout from San Francisco. If San Jose had been hit, we would have gotten more radiation. With the wind out of the west, the East Bay got most of the fallout.”

“We won’t be going up the Peninsula anytime soon will we?”

“Only if circumstances dictate that we do. We could probably spend the remainder of our lives just salvaging.”

“We can grow our own food, right?”

“I have quite an assortment of heirloom seeds. We can use the seeds to plant the following year so we’re good on that count. I tried to plan for the worst and hoped for the best. I never imagined that the worst would happen. Well, that isn’t true, I imagined it could, I just hoped it never would.”

“So you’re the Lone Ranger and I’m Tonto?”

“I’d say that we’re equal partners now, Rudy.”

“Whatever you say, Kemo Sabe.”

“Clayton Moore, I’m not.”

o

“What now, Jon?”

“What can I say, Mel? We’re basically starting over from scratch. We will have electricity only as long as we have fuel and the generators hold out. After that, we’ll have to have an alternate source of power if we still want electricity. Most of Morgan Hill is like a ghost town. Rudy and I have located 3 distinct and separate groups of survivors in addition to us. The closest we’ve gotten to them was on the first day when one of the groups took a shot at Rudy. He was driving his truck instead of the Squad. Maybe if he shows up in the Squad in uniform, they might not shoot.”

“Shoot first and ask questions later?”

“So far, yes.”

“Did you locate propane?”

“Yes, but the truck wouldn’t start. We may have to tow it. It had about 2,500-gallons of fuel left.”

“You’ll need to get it running if you want to get more propane.”

“Maybe Rudy can, I’m not much of a mechanic.”

“We have the gold and silver, we can buy things.”

“You can’t eat gold and silver, Mel. We can buy things if we can find anyone willing to sell. I imagine more of a barter system at first. Once that is going, maybe people will take gold or silver in exchange. You can never overlook the basic emotions set out in the 7 deadly sins, pride, envy, anger, avarice, sadness, gluttony, and lust.”

“What are the 7 virtues?”

“Humility, meekness, charity, chastity, moderation, zeal and generosity.”

“Not bad for a guy who can’t seem to find his way to church very often.”

“Mel, being a Christian is what you are, not what you say you are.”

“Beware the false prophet?”

“Something like that, I suppose.”

“We’re well represented, 2 Catholics, 1 Lutheran and 1 Methodist.”

“4 Christians, Mel, nothing more.”

“Obviously whoever launched those missile weren’t Christians.”

“You can’t say that honey, we retaliated. The US was predominately a Christian nation and yet we were the strongest military power in the world.”

“The power of God?”

“No, the power of the politicians.”

o

“So, have they outlawed all of the firearms yet?”

“I haven’t caught any broadcasts, but probably. I’d like to see them try and enforce it, whoever they may be. Off hand, I say we’re back to the basic Charter, the Constitution. I have a copy on my laptop. I also have a copy of the USC, for whatever that is worth.”

“Probably not much.”

“I’ll second the motion.”

“A government of the people, by the people and for the people?”

“In theory, but probably not since the Gettysburg Address and probably not even then. I’ve also heard the Civil War called The War of Northern Aggression.”

“So who are we, the Yankees or the Rebs?”

“In these times and circumstances, probably Johnny Reb. The Lone Ranger was from Texas, Kemo Sabe.”

“What am I then?”

“Probably a Navajo.”

“Wrong, Aztec.”

“If you say so.”

“I think maybe I’ll reclaim California for México.”

“Good riddance,” Jon chuckled.

◦

If you think about it, Rudy’s joking remark made sense. The population of California was at least half Hispanic. While the powers that be might disagree, the nation would probably return to its original roots of a collection of states, and at best, a Confederation. But, in the days after the world ended, nobody cared. Four distinct and separate groups turned out to mean four separate and distinct communities, beholding only to themselves. There was some cooperative interplay.

◦

“I located the base for AmeriGas at 295 E Virginia Street in San Jose. There is a second location, Suburban Propane at 3105 Monterey Road in San Jose. AmeriGas has a second location in Scotts Valley. I found a list of places in District 4 that accepted the Voyager Card from Cal Trans.”

“Did you get the delivery truck to run?”

“Yep.”

“We’ll go after a load tomorrow. We could probably use the full 3,000-gallons. We might even go back and refill the truck to give us another load.”

“We should be thinking about food and fuel for our vehicles.”

“Did you check out that Chevron tanker on 101?”

“I didn’t. We can do that when we go to San Jose tomorrow.”

“We?”

“It smells like it’s half and half.”

“Full?”

“We got lucky, both tanks are full. I’ll see if I can get the tractor to start. No luck, did we bring jumper cables?”

“I brought jumper cables and a can of ether.”

“Let’s move the propane truck and hook up the cables. You can squirt the ether, Jon while I try and crank it over again.”

“Did you check and see if there was fuel in the tractor’s tanks?”

“No.”

“Empty, let me siphon from the diesel tank, I brought a length of garden hose.”

“That’s probably why the truck was sitting here. The driver ran out of fuel and didn’t have a siphon hose.”

“I think that that might be his body over there by the side of the road.”

“That guy was shot.”

“Might have been defending his load.”

“With what?”

“He had one of those miniature baseball bats, a tire checker?”

“They’re illegal in California.”

“Yeah, what isn’t?”

“Squirt now.”

Whine, whine, roar...

“Got it.”

“I never would have guessed.”

“You seem to lean toward being a smartass.”

“Sorry, Rudy, I couldn’t help myself.”

A Home of Their Own – Chapter 15

“You don’t speak Spanish, do you?”

“What’s the Mexican word for no?”

“No.”

“Oh? No. Why?”

“Poyo with arrows? Puh-yo con a-rose.”

“I was close enough, Mel figured it out.”

“Mel’s Spanish is better than mine. I mostly learned Spanish from Maria.”

“An Aztec who doesn’t speak Spanish? I thought that most Aztecs didn’t speak English.”

“I’m a 9th generation Californian, Jon. My family quit speaking Spanish about 3 generations back. I couldn’t carry on an intelligent conversation in Spanish until I got married.”

“And now?”

“I can really cuss well in Spanish. Maria is 9th generation too, but her family held on to the language.”

o

“Before I bought the map software, I had pdf files on my computer of all of the states.”

“How did you manage that?”

“I went to <http://www.nationalatlas.gov/printable/reference.html#Alaska> where you see 4 columns. The first is the name of the state, the second is the type of maps available for the state, the third is the preview of the map and the fourth says ‘print pdf map’. I have a subdirectory of pdf files wherein I created a subdirectory named state maps. I right clicked on the ‘print pdf map’ legend and left clicked on ‘save target as’. I then directed my computer to the state maps sub directory and shortened the name by eliminating the characters ‘pagegen_’ and clicked save. I ended up with a pdf file in the sub directory named, for example, ‘ca.pdf’. I did all 50 state reference maps, which were actually 51 because it included ‘prvi.pdf’ for Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.”

“That’s a lot of downloading.”

“I had DSL, it didn’t take so long. It was an inexpensive way to start my collection of maps.”

“What about the District of Columbia?”

“It’s on the map of Maryland, md.pdf. Without a broadband connection, however, it would have taken all day to download those maps.”

(Yes, Virginia, you can download pdf maps of the entire US, state by state, following the instructions I just gave, but only if you have broadband. Otherwise plan on spending a day at it. The maps print on 8½” x 11” paper, but if you have a printer that uses 11” x 17” paper, I have 2, you can expand them.)

“How long did it take you?”

“Less than an hour.”

“De nada.”

“Huh?”

“Spanish for, ‘you’re welcome’.”

“We didn’t always have money, Rudy that came later. We both worked until after Mel’s mom and sister were killed. Then Mel decided to have JP and she quit during her 8th month after her pension was vested.”

“And we came long after Jeeps was born, right?”

o

“Rudy called JP Jeeps today. It’s kinda cute.”

“You called Roberto, Bobby and Maria didn’t appreciate it. She said that if was going to have a nickname, it would be Rob.”

“I’d better stay on her good side. Rob it is. How about we check out the grocery stores tomorrow and lay in what supplies we can? I have the feeling that once they’re empty, they’re going to stay empty.”

“How will we pay, gold and silver?”

“If there is someone from the store there, yes. Otherwise we won’t be paying and I’m not about to let anyone say, ‘Finders, Keepers’.”

“I’m not going to shoot someone over some groceries.”

"It is time for you to pull your head out, Melody. This isn't the same civilized world it was when we went into the shelter a hundred and some days ago. Civilization as we have known it has changed, perhaps forever. I won't look for trouble, but I'll know it if I find it. Rudy feels the same way as I do so don't expect him to back you up. Those are the facts and they're cold and hard."

"Of course, I might shoot to protect you or the kids."

"Rusty will protect everyone, you just back him up."

"Is that why you wanted to get Angie a puppy?"

"No. But it is why I wanted a German Shepherd when we got her a puppy."

"Why not a Doberman?"

"A Doberman is more a one person dog. A German Shepherd is a one family dog."

"But Rusty gets along well with Rudy and Maria."

"They are part of our extended family. He gets along with Fred and Eleanor, too. He probably sees them as grandparents. We were in the shelter for over 3 months."

"Don't remind me and come to bed. There is a definite upside to having some privacy."

"Invitation accepted."

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"Rudy, do you mind if I ask if you're a Republican or Democrat?"

"I don't mind you asking if you don't mind me not answering."

"I wasn't trying to be rude, I was simply curious. Let me tell you about me instead, if you don't mind."

"Your nickel."

"I am and always have been a Republican because the party comes the closest to supporting what I believe in. Moderate Republican, I might add. I don't much cotton to the extremes, left or right, but especially not the liberal left. I suppose that it's wrong of me to say so, but I don't much care for abortion. I can perhaps understand it in the case of rape or incest but if it were I doing the choosing, it wouldn't happen. At the same time, I suppose I lean towards the right a little because they tend to support the Bill of Rights a little better. I believe in separation of church and state and don't believe that religion needs to get mixed up in politics any more than politicians need to express opinions

about religion. You are what you are and not what you say you are. I know that Mel was raised in the Lutheran Church and I was raised in the Methodist Church. She said that Maria and you belonged to the Catholic Church. I've attended Mass a few times and it was just church as far as I was concerned. I don't know what church Fred and Eleanor belong to but I can't see that it makes much difference. Maybe their 7th Day Adventist and maybe they don't belong to any church."

"You're right that we're Roman Catholic, Jon. Church is church although I think that as a Methodist you belong to a fairly liberal church. The Lutherans were Catholics in the beginning, you know."

"Mel says they still are and that in many ways the Lutheran Church is more Catholic than the Roman Catholic Church."

"Couldn't say, never attended a Lutheran Church. I think that Fred and Eleanor are Baptists, but I'm not sure."

"They're obvious part of the 144,000 saved Baptists, they made it through this."

"This isn't over yet, Jon. We'll see in a year how we're all doing. I don't know that this was Armageddon as it's described in Revelations, it could have been, but I sort of doubt it. Armageddon is the Plain of Megiddo and it's as much a place as a symbol. Maybe the first seal has been broken – I have no idea. The four horsemen of the Apocalypse are described in just eight verses of the book of Revelation, which is the last book in the bible. The four horsemen appear when the Lamb (Jesus) opens the first four seals of a scroll with seven seals, which is described in Revelation chapter 6. As each of the first four seals are opened a different colored horse and its rider is seen by the apostle John as described in Rev 6:1-8."

First seal is opened: a white horse appears, its rider held a bow, conquest. (Rev 6:1-8 NIV) I watched as the Lamb opened the first of the seven seals. Then I heard one of the four living creatures say in a voice like thunder, "Come!" I looked, and there before me was a white horse! Its rider held a bow, and he was given a crown, and he rode out as a conqueror bent on conquest.

Second seal is opened: a red horse appears, its rider holds a sword, war. When the Lamb opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say, "Come!" Then another horse came out, a fiery red one. Its rider was given power to take peace from the earth and to make men slay each other. To him was given a large sword.

Third seal is opened: a black horse appears, its rider holds a pair of scales, famine. When the Lamb opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, "Come!" I looked, and there before me was a black horse! Its rider was holding a pair of scales in his hand. Then I heard what sounded like a voice among the four living creatures, saying, "A quart of wheat for a day's wages, and three quarts of barley for a day's wages, and do not damage the oil and the wine!"

Fourth seal is opened: a pale horse appears, its rider is called Death. When the Lamb opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature say, "Come!" I looked, and there before me was a pale horse! Its rider was named Death, and Hades was following close behind him. They were given power over a fourth of the earth to kill by sword, famine and plague, and by the wild beasts of the earth.

The fifth seal reveals those who had been slain because of the word of God and their testimony, that is the persecuted church. The sixth seal reveals the day of the Lord, which brings the Lamb's wrath to those on the earth. The opening of the seventh seal reveals silence. The seven seals sum up human history from the viewpoint of heaven and the church. There is war, famine and pestilence in general and on the church in particular there is persecution, then the end will come bringing terror to the world, this probably accounts for the silence of the seventh seal.

What is described by the seals is similar to the signs of the end of the age as described by Jesus in Matthew 24. There will be wars, famines and earthquakes (Mat 24:6-8), persecution (24:9-14), the heavenly bodies are shaken (Mat 24:29) and 'at that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn' (Mat 24:30). After the opening of the seven seals the scroll can be read and we find more detail, but this starts in chapter 8. The seven seals describe tribulation that is largely man made (wars, famine and persecution) but under the control of God, the seven trumpets are disasters sent by God with the aim of persuading man to repent, the seven bowls are the final outpouring of God's wrath on impenitent mankind. The fact that Christ opens the seven seals indicates his sovereignty over the future. Jesus is the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End (Rev 22:13), he is sovereign from the beginning to the end of history, and everything in between.

"Do you preach often?"

"You brought it up, and we could be seeing the first seal, Conquest, being broken and perhaps the second, War. China wanted to take over Taiwan, the first seal, and it led to a war, the second seal. Famine and death will surely follow."

"I guess I should go to church more often."

"We'll probably end up holding a non-denominational service right here if that is ok with you."

"I can't believe it would hurt, I'd support that. Why don't you get Maria to talk to Mel and Eleanor? We know who wears the pants in most families. And, don't get your machismo all in a dither, but, it's the truth and you know it."

"I suppose I do, but I'll pretend you didn't say it."

"Works for me."

◦

Armageddon? Were the first 2 seals broken? That meant that the 3rd Seal, Famine, was close at hand and the 4th Seal, Death, was his companion. Pretty heady thoughts; time to take a deep breath and see about the 1,000-years of strife. Even the Methodists read the Bible. The difference between the Methodist Church and the Roman Catholic Church was that Mass was essentially predefined and basically repeated on an annual basis. Perhaps to teach the lessons, so they wouldn't be forgotten? If it was the beginning of the end, it wouldn't come for a while, mankind had to endure about 30-some generations of strife. Who could say about the Methodist Church, probably some variation on the same general theme? After Jon and Rudy's conversation, Jon and Mel never missed a Sunday service. Was Rudy a reincarnation of the Good Samaritan, he rendered aid to those in need?

Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, [so let him give]; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.

Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren, which dwelt in Judea:

[God] Who will render to every man according to his deeds.

The point is it's never too late to 'get religion'. I was looking for "To each, his own..."

And why religion at times as this? Maybe because for the first time in your life, you suddenly realize that all you really have is your faith. Sorry that I'm not a heathen, that would make it so much easier. You realize that God must have let you live for some purpose.

◦

"Why haven't we received radio transmission explaining what is expected of us at the moment? The government would never miss an opportunity to tell us what to do."

"Perhaps they're getting organized. They may have trouble getting the EAS back online."

"Or, maybe the President didn't survive the attack. Did that ever occur to you?"

"I hope not."

"Why?"

"That would mean that Hillary was President."

“I’m an Independent.”

“What?”

“The answer to your earlier question, I vote independent. I vote for whomever I think can do the best job.”

“I suppose that most people do. But, when in doubt, I go one way, Republican.”

“And I try to eliminate the doubt.”

“And if you can’t decide?”

“I probably cancel your vote.”

“It probably doesn’t matter, Rudy. We may not have an election for a while.”

o

“And to think, all we wanted was a home of our own. Well, Mel, we’ve got it, but as many empty houses available in the area, had we known, we could have waited and had our choice for the taking.”

“You’re overlooking something, Jon. After we bought the land, you spent months building our shelter. I even borrowed money from the law office to put in the first generator. We could have built the home when your parents’ estate settled but we used that uninsured motorist settlement to buy the extra 3½ acres and erect the barn. We also spent some of that money on other things, the second generator for example. If you hadn’t put in the shelter, we’d probably be dead, like most of Morgan Hill.”

“Still think I’m a crazy survivalist?”

“Survivalist, but events proved you weren’t crazy. To best honest, I considered the shelter to be a secure underground storage facility, an ultra-fancy fruit cellar, if you prefer. Best money we ever spent. I still don’t see the need for 4 military rifles and suppressed pistols.”

“Two of those 4 military rifles, as you chose to call them, belonged to your father. They were patterned off the two M1A rifles. As far as those suppressors go, they could prove extremely handy in the future. We haven’t been out of the shelter so many days that many folks have been able to get out and around. Those who came out too early either died of radiation overexposure or are very ill. As far as salvaging goes, I pay for the things if the stores are open for business under they own managers, but I don’t think many of them survived.”

“Just how many people are there?”

A Home of Their Own – Chapter 16

“Rudy and I haven’t approached those 3 other groups yet, so I have no idea. After we accumulate enough to tide us over for a while, we’re planning on doing just that. Remember one of those groups fired on Rudy the first day he went out after we left the shelter on a permanent basis. Whether or not that group will prove to be friendly hasn’t been determined. If we find ourselves in a situation where circumstances dictate we take the offense, those suppressors could give us an edge. They are only regulated in the US, not totally prohibited. The same can be said for short barreled rifles and short barrel shotguns.”

“Why do you get *The American Hunter*, you don’t hunt?”

“I do belong to the National Rifle Association. I purchased a life membership when I was in the Air Force. As a member you receive a magazine every month, either *The American Rifleman* or *The American Hunter*. The Rifleman is more oriented to the shooting sports and the Hunter to hunting. I’m not into the sport of shooting and took the Hunter to keep abreast of hunting conditions in the area. We could end up hunting to provide meat for the table.”

“You’re just full of surprises.”

“It wasn’t important. I saved the magazines because sometimes I got busy and didn’t have time to read them. Now I have a carton or two of unread books to catch up on.”

“But you had Daddy’s .30-06.”

“True, but that’s a hunting rifle, ill-suited to a combat situation. The M1A was patterned after the M14, a rifle that saw service with the US military. It’s still used by some Marines and onboard ships in some circumstances. The M14 was originally select fire meaning semi auto or full auto; but it proved to be unmanageable in full auto because it was just too light for the ammo it used. They’ve also made the Mini-14 in full auto, but very few. Full auto is only useful in some desperate situations and only then when the weapons can remain on target during burst or full auto fire.”

“Where did you get the idea for the scope?”

“Rudy suggested a Leopold Mark 4 variable, 3.5-10×40mm and the .30-06 bullet drop compensator. I took the rifle in one day and left it while I was at work. I haven’t had a chance to fine-tune the sighting; it is only bore sighted by the gunsmith. They recommended 180 grain Winchester Silvertip Supreme AccuBond CT so I picked up a case of 200 rounds. I need to finish sighting it in.”

“Two hundred rounds don’t sound like a lot of ammo for your hunting rifle.”

“It was all he had. If I can get by the store again, assuming it’s still there, I could probably pickup another case; that’s all he carried at a time except for hunting season.”

“We’re well into fall; it could snow at any time.”

“Rudy and I will check.”

o

“I see a light on in the store. It must be occupied.”

“I’ll knock on the door and see if I can rouse anyone.”

“Go away, we’re closed.”

“Jon Jones. I’m a customer and I’ve bought a lot of stuff in this store.”

“You’re a damned fool, running around in times like these but at least you’re armed with the M1A I sold you.”

“And backed up by the other. I need some of the .30-06 ammo if you have it. Mind if I ask what you’re doing in the store?”

“I live here now. If I didn’t, they’d steal me blind. Didn’t have a basement at home but the store has one. Missus works here too, so when they gave the alarm, we stopped inventorying and headed for the basement.”

“Can you sell me any more of that .30-06 I bought?”

“Don’t take credit cards, checks or cash; gold and silver only. I sell based on the price that gold and silver were when the balloon went up.”

“That must be one hell of a markup.”

“Probably is. You and your friend get in here so I can lock the door.”

“Standby generator?”

“Yeah with the biggest propane tank you ever saw.”

“You must be getting low on propane.”

“I am, so?”

“Rudy and I can supply propane in exchange for the ammo. Or, I can give you gold and silver, it’s up to you.”

“Got any groceries?”

“What do you have available in ammo?”

“We were inventorying the shipment I got in for fall hunting season, what do you need?”

I could use 180 grain Winchester Silvertip Supreme AccuBond CT.”

“I need 6,000-gallons of propane and enough food for me and the missus for a while.”

“Pickup load of food and 3,000-gallons tomorrow. If we have time, we’ll get you the second load.”

“Mi casa, su casa.”

“Do you need any prescriptions?” Rudy asked.

“Nexium, got ulcers you know, and Calan for my blood pressure.”

“If you’ll let me out, I’ll get some from the Squad.”

“Samples?”

“Didn’t cost me anything; take them, there’s enough for 3 months. Let me check you and your wife over and make sure you don’t need anything else.”

“How did you know I took 80mg Calan?” (Verapamil)

“I didn’t, it’s the only size I have. You can break them in half for the 40mg tablet and take 1½ if the doctor has you on 120mg.”

“Much obliged. Got any food with you?”

“Some MRE Entrees is all.”

“Tell you what, I’ll trade you ammo for food and propane and we’ll use the prewar prices of everything just to keep it even.”

o

“You can’t stay in this store for the rest of your life.”

“I don’t have a Geiger counter, so we just stayed downstairs until I heard your knock on the door. You two are the first people we’ve seen.”

“You’ve been out of Calan for a while, haven’t you?”

“Yeah about 2½ months.”

“It shows, 170/100.”

“Bad?”

“Not good. 120/80 would be normal for a guy like you on his medication. How’s your stomach?”

“I had a couple of bottles of Pepcid.”

“I checked your wife over and she’s fine. A bit of anxiety there, but that’s understandable.”

“Got anything you can give her?”

“Xanax, 0.25mg. It’s all I have, but it can be addictive. Make sure she doesn’t take more than 3 a day. Let me out and I’ll get some from the Squad.”

“Take a case of that ammo with you when you go. Didn’t get your name.”

“Rudy.”

“Paramedic?”

“Santa Clara County Fire Department.”

“You need anything?”

“The only firearms I have are the weapons Jon gave me.”

“You can get us more drugs?”

“All you need until the supply runs out, yes.”

“What are you doing?”

“Rudy live with you, Jon?”

“His wife Maria is our housekeeper and he helped with the stock.”

“What kind of stock?”

“Horses.”

“You got any single action revolvers?”

“A few, yes.”

“Got Colts?”

“Rugers.”

“Winchesters?”

In the same caliber as the Rugers.”

“Got a .45 Colt?”

“Always wanted one, why?”

“I have the Beretta Stampedes and I have the Colts. They’re in .45 Colt. I also have some Winchester rifles in .45 Colt. I was thinking that you can’t take enough ammo to offset 6,000-gallons of propane. How about I even things out by tossing in 2 Winchester rifles and 2 Colt revolvers and some of the .45 Colt ammo.”

“Uh, if you insist.”

“You’re from Morgan Hill, right?”

“East side of town.”

“Any empty homes in Morgan Hill?”

“Most of them.”

“I finally placed you. A couple of M1As, a bunch of Browning Hi-Powers and you worked at the airport.”

“That’s me.”

“9mm is mighty underpowered.”

“We probably won’t be going up against anyone wearing Interceptor body armor.”

“If you were of a mind to help me and the wife find a house in Morgan Hill and the two of you could help us move our stuff, we could maybe move down there.”

“If you move, you won’t need the propane here, will you?”

“I’ll still need it in Morgan Hill.”

“Is your generator portable?”

“Six men and a boy portable. Can’t move the tanks, though.”

“We can find tanks for you; they’re all over the place.”

“Feel like moving me and my stuff to Morgan Hill?”

“There is an empty house not far from us. It’s an older home, but it does have a basement. The people both worked in Redwood City and didn’t make it home.”

“You’re sure they’re not coming back?”

“No, but if they were, I think they would have made it by now.”

“Can you get a semi?”

“We have a tractor; all we would need would be a trailer.”

“Rudy, thanks for the drugs. Jon and I have been talking and the wife and I are moving to Morgan Hill. I have a Winchester rifle, a Colt revolver, John Wayne Rig and a case of ammo for each of you. Any objections to helping us move?”

“T,t,thanks, no, I’d be glad to help.”

“Stuttering problem, Rudy?”

“Not until now.”

o

“That’s the last of it. Darned generator must have weighed a ton.”

“We set a 3,000-gallon tank last night, Marty, and will put in another later. We won’t be able to unload and hook up your generator until tomorrow. How about you and Rosemary stay with us for the night?”

“Thanks, Jon. Did you get the groceries?”

“The trailer we found was a Costco trailer. I guess you could say we found a little food; a truckload that took us most of the night to unload.”

“Not wonder you look like you’ve been rode hard and put up wet. A tank and a trailer load of food?”

“Mixed load and it wasn’t all food. We have enough office supplies to last 100 years.”

“I’ll put my store in the basement and probably even set up a reloading bench, I have all of those components.”

o

“Mel, meet Marty and Rosemary Carson. I told them they could stay with us for tonight. We have the contents of Marty’s store on the trailer.”

“Maria is cooking tonight, enchiladas, refried beans and Spanish rice.”

“Tacos?”

“Yes.”

“Marty, you may want to take a Pepcid before you eat.”

“Hot?”

“Moderate.”

“If that was moderate, I don’t think I’d want to even look at her hot food.”

“I guess we’ve gotten used to it.”

“Let me show the two of you to the guest room.”

“Thanks Melody. We’ve got to find some clothes, we didn’t have much at the store and I’ve been washing them out by hand. All we had were 2 changes.”

“You can use my washer and dryer, Rosemary and we can go shopping in a day or two.”

“Shopping?”

“Salvaging.”

“Isn’t that stealing?”

“I suppose. We’d pay if the owner of the store were around. But they aren’t and we can’t wait for them to open, assuming they ever do.”

A Home of Their Own – Chapter 17

“Marty always complained that the store wasn’t in a good location and most people didn’t know where it was. All they had to do was look in the Yellow Pages; we had an ad in all of them. Turned out that the location worked to our benefit, until Jon and Rudy showed up, we hadn’t seen a soul. San Jose under Chief McNamara wasn’t a good place to do business. Under Chief Cobarruviaz it wasn’t much better and Chief William Lansdowne was followed by Robert Davis so it wasn’t the best city in which to have a gun store.”

“Worked in your favor this time, didn’t it?”

“Did it ever. Of course Marty has his own private gun collection. It is stuff that became illegal in California and he sold it to himself and put it up.”

“What kind of stuff?”

“Assault weapons, high capacity magazines and some ammo. You want something, my Marty probably has it.”

o

“Jon, did you know that Marty has his own gun collection?”

“I didn’t know, Mel, but I assumed he did. What brought that up?”

“Rosemary mentioned that when things became illegal in California, Marty sold them to himself and kept them. She didn’t say what he had, but she mentioned assault weapons, high capacity magazines and ammo.”

“I wouldn’t mind arming Maria and you with 7.62x51mm weapons. The same goes for Fred and Eleanor. I’ll have a visit with Marty when we unload the truck.”

“Do you have any more of the M1As?”

I don’t, too expensive and I never sold many. I have 7.62x51mms if that’s what you’re looking for.”

“What do you have?”

“Ya have a choice, Jon. I have the HK91s and some FAL rifles, English, not metric. I also have some HK93s and AR-15s but you already have the Mini-14s.”

“Magazines?”

“Used, but I went over them and made any repairs they needed. I got stuck with a bunch of them when they outlawed high capacity magazines.”

“I was thinking about the wives plus Fred and Eleanor.”

“Let’s finish unloading and we can pick out something tonight, after we eat.”

“I finished wiring in that generator, all you need to do is hook it to the propane tank and it’s ready to go,” Fred explained.

“Fred, it seems like I should know you. Your name is very familiar.”

“I don’t know from where, Marty.”

“Were you in Vietnam?”

“Two tours, USMC.”

“You did one tour, when home and volunteered for a second tour, right?”

“How did you know?”

“Got your butt shot off in Khe Sanh?”

“I don’t believe we ever met, Marty.”

“We did, but you were too busy bleeding to remember. I was on my first tour and was one of the guys on the stretcher when they finally evacuated you. We never met formally, but they were talking about how stupid you were.”

“Well, thanks for the lift, anyway.”

“You come by after supper, I have something you might appreciate.”

“What?”

“Call it a surprise. Jon, Rudy and you come by too. I have more of the FAL magazines than the H&K magazines, but personally, I favor the HK91. Don’t matter none, I have plenty of both.”

“We’ll hook up a 25-gallon (100#) propane bottle for tonight and finish the hookup tomorrow, Marty.”

“Works for me.”

◦

“Look familiar?”

“Where in the hell did you get a new, in the box, M14 rifle? Semi or full?”

“Semi. Everything is there, magazines, bayonet and I have more new magazines.”

“I picked it up a few right after I got home from Vietnam. I have 2 left, that one and the one I carry. How’s your butt?”

“Left one hell of a scar. Got me back to my senses. Took a while to heal. What else do you want to know?”

I think you covered it. Like the rifle?”

“What not to like? You have the rifle, M6 Bayonet with M8A1 sheath, Bandolier, Sling, Combination Tool, Cleaning equipment, Magazine filler, Model 1961 ammunition magazine pocket, Grenade launcher, Grenade launcher sight and magazines? Got any of the grenades?”

“M31 HEAT, ok with you?”

“Got the M64 grenade round to launch them with?”

“More than you will ever use.”

“What are the two of you talking about? I thought they used the M-79 grenade launcher in Vietnam?”

“That came later, Jon. They started out with the rifle grenade launched from the M14 rifle. It was the M31 HEAT and it used a blank, the M64, to launch it. I worked at the Depot in Barstow for a while. Picked up a few things, you know. That grenade will penetrate 10” of armor.”

“Those have to be 40 years old.”

“Probably.”

“Are they safe to shoot?”

“Interesting question.”

“What about the HK91s?”

“Fred, do you want an AR for Eleanor?”

“Chrome plated barrel?”

“Naturally.”

“Sure. Got a couple of M1911s?”

“For you, sure.”

“What about the HK91s?”

“I’ll get to you in a minute, Jon, hold your horses.”

“What do I owe you for the booty?”

“Nothing. I’ll sell you ammo. Call it old times’ sake.”

“Wee doggie!”

“Got a couple of new, in the box, HK91s?”

“That I do. And since you help me move, you can have them for \$2,000 apiece.”

“Say what?”

“\$2,000 apiece. They’d bring more than that most places. They are new in the original box.”

“Magazines?”

“\$20 each.”

“Maybe if you figure Gold at \$1,000 an ounce.”

“5 ounces for 2 rifles, 22 magazines and 2 cases of ammo.”

“Jewish, are you Marty?”

“Yeah, how did you know? That’s a fair price for the rifles.” (It is.)

“We have non-denominational services on Sundays.”

“Good, I may be Jewish, but I’m a Messianic Jew. Christian to the uninformed.”

“I thought it was always the Christians converting to Judaism.”

“Only the famous who think they have something to gain.”

“What do they gain?”

“Dual citizenship. Believe me, it isn’t worth it.”

“So do the Israelis really have nukes?”

“Yeah right, I’m a secret member of Mossad making a living in San Jose, California selling guns. It’s one hell of a fine cover. How the hell would I know? I wouldn’t bet against it, though. You want the guns, let’s see the gold.”

“Here.”

“Help yourselves.”

“Aren’t you going to bite the gold pieces to see if they’re real?”

“Been watching a lot of movies? I’ll weight them.”

“You have a nickname, Marty?”

“My friends call me Shy. But for now, Marty is fine.”

“I suppose we should pull the bacon and sausage out of the food supplies?”

“Why?”

“Never mind.”

◦

That was most definitively a non-denominational congregation, 2 Roman Catholics, 2 Baptists, 2 Messianic Jews, a Lutheran and a Methodist. They started out the Sunday service by agreeing that Christ was born as a Jew in Bethlehem. Next they agreed that He had died on the Cross to atone mankind’s sins. After that, it sort of went downhill. All they need to round out the congregation was a 7th Day Adventist and a member of Jehovah’s Witness. Instead, each took 10 minutes to try and explain the basic doctrine of their particular church. The Methodists, and it came as no surprise, were very liberal.

Once they got Marty and Rosemary settled in and the 3,000-gallon tank connected, they got a second 3,000-gallon and a third. Marty started covering them with dirt to protect them from flying bullets, a just in case sort of thing. Marty and Fred decided that the M31 HEAT rounds might be a little long in the tooth and decided to save them for a last ditch, emergency stand. Jon and Rudy gathered the firemen together and buried them in a common grave in a piece of land not buried in 4” of concrete. Next, the two of them started hitting drug stores getting prescription meds and bandages.

“There is no point in getting much more, Jon, we’re up to an 8 year supply and they won’t last that long.”

“You may be right, but there are 3 other groups here in Morgan Hill. Maybe they could use some things.”

“Let’s save the group that shot at me for last, ok with you?”

“Whatever trips your trigger Rudy.”

o

Group 1 turned out to have named their group after the name of their housing tract. They covered Rudy and he went up to the entrance and identified himself. Once they were satisfied, they invited Jon and Rudy in and Rudy checked out the 30-odd people who had managed to survive. It was in a 12’x50’ USS shelter. Under the circumstances, they were reasonably healthy. Rudy told them where they could find food and got a list of their meds. They made a trip back to a couple of drug stores and picked up the items needed. One guy claimed to have picked up London on his radio and gold was at \$1,200 per troy ounce. They agreed that 60 ounces of .999 fine silver equaled one ounce of 24 karat gold. They arranged for Jon and Rudy to hook up with the second group a couple of miles away on the following day.

“How did it go?”

“Mel. They were way worse off than we are. Thirty-some people in a shelter with about 500ft² of floor space. We stopped off and picked meds for them and dropped them off. We also told them where to find to look for food and fuel. They wanted to know about weapons and we told them that once we knew them a little better, we’d refer them to a friend.”

“Did you give them any food?”

“Yeah about a pickup load, stuff that came off the Costco truck.” One person had a well that the city had ordered him to shut down. He must be a Republican because he started a lawsuit against Morgan Hill and got a stay order to keep it open until the case was decided. We’ll be going to tract 2 tomorrow.”

“Unannounced?”

“They said they send a runner to let them know we were coming.”

“This isn’t the group that shot at Rudy is it?”

“We’re saving them for last. And just perhaps we can get the folks from tract 1 and tract 2 to give us a hand.”

“Are you arming them?”

“Not at the moment, no. We might try and clear out the weapons in the Morgan Hill PD to get them started, but neither Rudy nor I wanted them to meet Marty and Rosemary just yet.”

“If that safe to do?”

“Haven’t seen a single cop, alive. I have the feeling that Rudy is carrying a little guilt that he wasn’t with them.”

“That’s just plain silly. He delivered Maria’s baby, their son, and if he’d have been out there, he’d probably be dead.”

“I told him that, but I’m not sure he agrees.”

◦

Group 2 also named their little community after their housing tract. The majority in the group was seniors and it took them most of the day to check out the 50-odd people and determine what their needs were. Again, Jon told them were to get food and fuel while Rudy went from pharmacy to pharmacy trying to locate prescription meds. He came up short this time and check out the local hospital. Here, he did very well. So well in fact that he decided that on the following day, they’d empty out the hospital pharmacy and the drug carts at the various nurses stations. Jon suggested that Marty and Fred see what they could do at the Morgan Hill Police Department.

Fred seemed to be spryer; maybe it was the shot of 7.62-caliber medicine Marty had given him. The group in tract 2 was unable to put them in touch with tract 3 and when they returned to tract 1, they learned the same. Tract 2’s water source was a loaded Sparkletts water truck that didn’t run but had started out full.

“Marty I don’t suppose you have any heavier firepower do you?”

“What did you have in mind?”

“I’m not really sure, but the only contact we’ve had with group 3 is that contact on the first day when they took a shot at Rudy.”

“Why are you numbering them and not using their names?”

“Easier to remember. What do you have?”

“I have 2 M1928A1s with 50 round drums. It’s about the only thing I have that will put down a heavy barrage of fire. Unless Fred and I are invited.”

A Home of Their Own – Chapter 18

“Say you were, then what?”

“You know the BAR?”

“Who doesn’t?”

“I have a M1918A1. If you want us to come along, we could provide fire support.”

“Barstow?”

“Somewhere, I’d rather not say.”

“Would you recommend that Rudy and I use our suppressors?”

“Whatcha got?”

“Surefire 762s.”

“Howya get those?”

“Strawman. I have 2 for the M1As and 4 cans or the Browning Hi-Powers.”

“Threaded barrels?”

“Four.”

“Let me know if you need more, I have some.”

“Thanks.”

“Don’t mention it. Ever. If you decide to go to 1911s, I have those barrels too.”

“We don’t have any 1911s.”

“I do.”

“I’ll keep that in mind. Do you have the mufflers?”

“A few fell of a turnip truck.”

“Right.”

◦

Anyone who knows anything about the National Firearms Registry knows that it is grossly inaccurate. People getting busted for what they never owned and others owned weapons that fell off of turnip trucks. The ATF tries, but they're only human and sloppy at times. How many times do the numbers get copied, transposed, etc.? Not that you could bank on that because if you did, you'd probably learn that jails are houses with bars on the windows. You have to be able and willing to produce any NFA firearm registered to you. Jon's friend had it covered no doubt and after the end of the world where were the ATF records anyway? Maybe his friend was dead; Reno could easily have gotten fallout from San Francisco.

"We've decided we'd better take the Thompsons. How many drums do you have?"

"5 per. What about Fred and me?"

"You can drive Rudy's truck. You lay back and provide cover fire, should we need it."

"Fred will take his M14 with the grenade launcher and 4 of those rifle grenades."

"Are they safe?"

"I reckon we're going to find out."

"Hold up here fellas."

"Rog, we got your six."

"You figure the Thompson out?"

"I think so, but we might know soon. I was right about here when they fired."

"I move up a bit closer."

"Wait, let me get in the back of the truck. I can fire over the top."

"Good idea."

"Whatcha guys got?"

"Nada."

"Rog, we don't see any signs of life."

"The barricade is down, Jon."

"I move closer."

“Careful.”

“Hey Jon, there’s a body over there.”

“Let’s get out and check it out. Marty, you guys move up a bit, we’re going to check out a body.”

Click, click.

“How long?”

“Not over a week.”

“And it was almost 2 weeks ago that you were fired on?”

“Yeah.”

“Marty, you and Fred move up, we need to do a house-to-house search.”

Click, click.

What they found were bodies and lots of them. The house had been cleaned out like someone had used a vacuum cleaner. Not one bit of food or water and certainly no fire-arms. Some of the women lay naked on beds with bullet holes in their foreheads, throats slit and some may have been strangled. It was at best an unpleasant sight and at worst, caused Jon to lose his breakfast. The men and the boys had been executed and their corpses were long dead, perhaps 2 weeks, Rudy thought. Women and girls weren’t so lucky. There wasn’t a single living soul in the house tract and most of the gas caps were missing from the vehicles.

“I’d like to get my hand on the scum who did this,” Marty remarked.

“We’d better get our butts home, pronto.”

“Right. I call the girls on the radio and tell them what we found.”

“Fine, but don’t get too specific.”

o

“What did you find?”

“The tract was attacked by someone, probably criminals. No survivors.”

“There’s more isn’t there?”

"I don't know what you mean."

"Bullcrap, I know that look. Tell me."

"The men and boys were dead about 2 weeks. The women more recently and they were very poorly treated."

"Raped you mean."

"Yes."

"And the girls?"

"Same thing."

"The next time I give you any crap about the rifle and pistols, remind me about Group 3. Did you let the other two tracts know?"

"Yes, on the way back. We divided the weapons from MHPD between them, and we gave them police radios."

"What kind of sick animal does something like that?"

"I wish I knew, Mel."

"We're awfully spread out with Fred in one direction and Marty in another."

"There's no way we can move their houses and I don't know that they'd want to give them up. What would we do, put them in mobile homes?"

"The thought had occurred to me."

"You can get together with Maria, Eleanor and Rosemary and let us know what you decide."

"Why is it up to us?"

"It's always been up to you, Rudy and I have known for a long time how it works. He and I discussed the possibility of pulling in another singlewide to use as a clinic."

"Then it wouldn't be all that difficult to bring in a couple of more trailers."

"We have 5 acres, although I wasn't thinking of setting up a community."

"We have a community, it's just too spread out."

o

Hey another survivalist community wasn't my idea blame Mel. They found doublewides on lots in San Jose and dragged them back to the acreage. Using a set of the assembly tools they assembled 3 homes and Fred and Eleanor took one, Marty and Rosemary the second and Rudy and Maria the third. The singlewide was turned into the clinic and Rudy held office hours for the folks from Group 1 and Group 2. Rosemary, Maria, Eleanor and Mel did some shopping and loaded up on clothing of various sizes, mainly children's clothing and primarily jeans, shirts, sock and underclothes.

The fellas went up and down 101 from Gilroy to San Jose, gathering anything they could use or trade. Over the course of the next 3 months, they called the day they left the shelter Freedom Day; they assembled as much as they could. West of Tracy on I-5 were wind turbines but when they tried to head that way, the survey meters started to click and they backed off. They pretty well cleanout the grocery stores among the 3 groups and nobody was short of food or fuel, for the moment at least.

On their own, the other groups located gas fueled generators and propane tanks. In due course everyone had electricity and there was fuel in the area to last them for years. Marty scrounged them a tractor, plow and disk and they were able to lay out a large garden to be planted in spring. The other group set their gardens up on empty lots or adjacent land. The tractor was a 60 year old Ford 2N with a 2 bottom plow and a single straight disk. Later, they found a drag and figured out what it was used for, to level the disked land.

o

"Did you know that some federal types showed up in San Jose last week?"

"Military or civilians?"

"Both. Here's one of the handbills they were passing out."

ATTENTION

The United States Army and the Federal Emergency Management Agency, working in concert, are establishing refugee camps in the San Jose area. All citizens of the United States are hereby ordered to report to the Camp on April 1, 2010 for registration and assignment of space.

All food, clothing and firearms will be secured and the food and clothing distributed on an equitable basis. All persons will be identified and issued an identification containing biometric data.

Failure to appear shall be a felony punishable by imprisonment of up to 2 years or a fine not to exceed \$10,000 as shall be determined by a military tribunal.

“Are you going to report as ordered?”

“Right, the second Tuesday of next week.”

“Won’t they come looking?”

“I’d imagine they would, eventually.”

“What are we going to do?”

“Not sure, Rudy. What did you do in the Army?”

“Infantry and Combat Lifesaver.”

“I was a truck driver, and worked on the flight line refueling aircraft. Too smart to be a cook or AP and too dumb to be anything else.”

“I never got that impression.”

“I didn’t think so either, but the Air Force did. That’s why I did my 4 and got out.”

“Hell of a gun collection you have.”

“That was Paul’s, Mel’s father. Nancy told me to bring it here because neither she, Mel or Joanne cared for guns. The only guns I bought were the 2 M1As, 8 Browning’s and later those 2 HK91s.”

“Why the Browning’s?”

“Like them better than the Beretta 92FS. Felt better in my hand, what can I say?”

“Single action.”

“Yeah, just like the M1911. Not exactly the same gun, but close. They’ve made millions of them. And, they use the NATO standard 9mm round.”

“We got two more fillies you know.”

“Women rule the world.”

“We should try to find a stallion so we can breed them.”

“Can you come up with one?”

“Probably but horse stealing is a hanging offense.”

“So, don’t get caught.”

o

Acquiring a stallion proved to be more a rescue than a theft. Jon and Rudy headed to the ranch with a pocket full of gold, hoping to buy a stallion. They left Fred and Marty to keep an eye on the home place. When they got to the ranch, they found the rancher long dead in the front of the house and the son was in the same condition on the front porch. They gritted their teeth and checked the house. The wife and younger son were dead too, both shot putting up a struggle. The floor was littered with brass but there weren’t any weapons lying around.

“He had weapons, I know he did, I’ve seen them.”

“The kitchen and pantry are empty Rudy. This was the same bunch or some just like them.”

“Let’s check the barn.”

“Empty.”

“We can check the back section; there is plenty of grass and water there.”

“I don’t see anything.”

“Over there, a stallion and 2 mares.”

“How do we do this?”

“Get the mares and lead them back to the corral, he’ll follow. Someone rustled the horses. There should be 100 head on the ranch.”

The short of it was that they got the 3 horses and the tack. They loaded them aboard a horse trailer they borrowed and headed back to town. When they got to the acreage, there was no one around. No bodies either. Rudy and Jon quickly unloaded the 3 horses and put them in the pasture. Then they went looking.

“Are you down there?”

“We’re here Jon, are they gone?”

“Who?”

A Home of Their Own – Chapter 19

“The Army and FEMA.”

“Come on up, they’re gone.”

When Marty and Rosemary had moved to the new doublewide, he’d left his guns and supplies in the basement of the old house because he didn’t have a basement on the acreage. Whoever it had been had gone through the houses and taken what food was available and left a receipt on the kitchen counters. They hadn’t searched the basements.

“What happened?”

“Fred spotted a group of Hummers and a bus. It was maybe 4 Hummers. They started at Marty’s old place and then headed here. We got into the shelter and shut down the generator. We used a flashlight to see and stayed as quiet as we could.”

“They cleaned out the pantries.”

“Did you get the horses?”

“A stallion and 2 mares. The family was dead, all shot up. So you don’t know what they wanted?”

“It’s April 2nd, maybe they’ve started to round up people for their gulag.”

“Gulag? Interesting choice of words.”

“What would you call them?”

“Gulag is probably more accurate than refugee camp or concentration camp.”

“What are we going to do?”

“They’ve been here and didn’t find anyone. Let’s hope they mark the acreage down as abandoned. We’d better check on the other 2 groups and then maybe Rudy and I can do a recon.”

“Do you want to restock the houses?”

“They could always come back; we’d better leave most of the food stored.”

Jon hadn’t yelled though 5’ of steel and 7’ of dirt; he’d used the intercom, a recent addition. Rusty... bristled he was really up tight. Where do you store a semi load of food and office supplies? How about the basement that never got finished? In many homes, ac-

cess to the basement is through an open staircase. In others, it's a separate door on one side. Jon was very obscure when he put in his stairs to the basement; they were through a panel at the side of the front hall closet. Later, when they finished the basement the plan was to open it up and convert the closet to a wide stairwell. They hadn't finished the basement with the paneling and wet bar, so it never got done. Secret panel? No, two doors. They pulled it off because most new homes didn't have basements. Their secret was buried in the County department with the building plans. If you're having trouble visualizing it, think about a regular stairs with a door. Which, in this case, just happens to open into the front hall closet instead of a room.

o

"If the two of you are dumb enough to go up there, we'd better have a word."

"What's on your mind Marty?"

"Those 9mm handguns of yours."

"What's wrong with them?"

"Not a thing, but you're going to need more firepower. Over the years, I been trying to improve the suppressor, it's a hobby of mine. I ended up closer to the original Maxim design. And, .45ACP is an ideal choice, since the standard 230 grain (15 g) loading is both powerful and subsonic."

"I'm willing to give one of your suppressors a try. What do you have?"

"20 years of trying to refine a design. The cartridges are standard 230 grain .45 ACP. Try it, you'll like it."

Pfutt, Pfutt, Pfutt, Pfutt, Pfutt, Pfutt, Pfutt. It was so quiet the mechanical action of the pistol was louder.

"Darn, that's half the sound level of the Browning."

"Not really, but it seems like it doesn't it? It's a dry can, not a wet can, but it only has a life of about 50 rounds before you have to replace the baffles."

"What did you do different?"

"Nothing. Suppressors with rubber baffles are quieter but the baffles wear out pretty fast with every shot becoming progressively louder. I used a synthetic is all and it lasts a little longer. Got the idea when they came out with Kevlar."

"Kevlar is a fiber."

“What I used was a synthetic, similar to synthetic rubber. After 35 rounds, it starts to lose its efficiency and after 50 rounds, don’t use it.”

Jon and Rudy headed to San Jose the next day to check things out. What they found were several groups of people, herded together in athletic fields. Athletic fields that were surrounded by wire, to protect the residents, no doubt, and guarded by a mixture of civilians in the Blackhawk black clothing and soldiers carrying M4/M203s. Ideally they’d avoid contact and scope things out. They were carrying the M1911s that Marty had fitted with his specially designed suppressors and their M1As. More important than either of those were their binoculars, Steiner, 20x80 Military, designed for use by Border Patrols at about \$1,100 a pair. Jon had gone first class when he came into money.

o

“Do you have the notebook?”

“Yes, Jon. I’ll write down whatever you tell me to.”

“Ok, camp 1. It appears that they have maybe 100 people living in tents. There is a dining hall and a restroom facility. The fence is about 10’ high and has a strand of wire about every 10”. The wire is on the inside of the posts, Rudy. They have a pair of guards posted on each corner, a FEMA guy and a soldier. They’re armed the same, M4/M203s. The people don’t seemed to be disturbed by being in the camp, some are playing checkers or chess, can’t really tell. Ready to check out camp 2?”

Rudy nodded and off they went to another school athletic field.

“Camp 2. More guards, maybe twice as many. Concertina on the inside. Same setup as the first camp, but I don’t see anyone playing games. I’d say this camp is for people too incorrigible to be in camp 1. One more camp, ready?”

“Not really. This isn’t the America I was raised in.”

“We have to check out the 3rd camp. I saved what I thought would be the worst for last.”

The third athletic field was much like the second, same number of guards, concertina, and the whole 9-yards. It had one additional feature, a gallows like they used in the old west to hang people. Jon didn’t see any bodies or graves. After he’d checked the place out and Rudy had taken notes, Rudy took a turn with the glasses. He didn’t say a word, but made a note in the notebook, “Graves behind the restroom tent.”

“I missed those.”

“Three camps, each worse than the previous, progressive discipline?”

“More like Nazi Germany, Rudy. I guess Mel had it right when she called them gulags.”

“A gulag was a slave labor camp for people deemed to be criminals of the state. Those are detention centers, but it appears if you accept what they hand out, you don’t have a problem.”

“We wouldn’t fit in.”

“No chit.”

“We’d better check on the other 2 groups and see what’s happening with them.”

o

“We checked out 3 camps, each progressive worse than the previous. The first camp must have been for the sheeple. The second camp was more heavily guarded and the third had a gallows. Rudy spotted graves.”

“Son-of-a-bitch.”

“What about the other groups here in Morgan Hill?”

“The first group went into their shelter the same as you did while we were gone. Same story, the Army and FEMA cleaned them out. The second group wasn’t so lucky. There were more of them and they were mostly seniors. I don’t remember seeing any of them in any of the camps. However, they, their food, just everything was gone.”

“How many in the first group?”

“About 30 Marty.”

“I can arm them if they’re willing to fight.”

“If we just go in shooting, they’ll end up bringing reinforcements and then where will we be?”

“I was thinking more in terms of helping them to disappear, first 1 and a couple days later 2. Make it look like desertions. Progressive desertions. Before you know it, they might have real desertions.”

“We can’t have there be any symmetry to process, that would be a dead giveaway.”

“Fred and I will figure out something. How about you take us over to meet group 1?”

“My name is Ralph Edwards and no, I not that Ralph Edwards. I guess I speak for everyone, what do you have in mind?”

“When it comes time to die, be not like those whose hearts are filled with the fear of death, so when their time comes they weep and pray for a little more time to live their lives over again in a different way. Sing your death song, and die like a hero going home.” Some Injun said that and he was right. We take them out, slowly and let their fear build.”

“We don’t have many weapons, how can we...”

“I have everything we need Ralph, I ran a gun store. Jon, demonstrate the M1911 that I fixed you up with.”

Pfutt, Pfutt, Pfutt, Pfutt, Pfutt, Pfutt, Pfutt.

“Are those legal?”

“Who is to say in this day and age?”

“Do you have enough to go around?”

“Been in business since ‘75. Worked at Barstow a while and then came to San Jose and opened my store. I always had the hot items and those were what they outlawed first. I have enough of things so no one will be unarmed.”

“Automatic weapons too?”

“A few, not many. You don’t want an automatic weapon anyway because they just waste ammo. Got some FALS, some Mini-14s, a few HK93s, you’ll see.”

“What do we do?”

“I’ll get you armed and you can get familiar with the weapons. The 4 of us can start the ball rolling.”

Marty’s personal collection turned out to be as big as the inventory of his store. He also added, never sold and occasionally went elsewhere to acquire things that he couldn’t get in California. His store inventory provided the ammo and he provided the rest, on loan.

Their first hit was on an M-1114, one of those armored HMMWVs that had a Ma Deuce mounted. If the soldier were supposed to desert that only meant that they and their vehicle had to disappear. A Hummer isn’t the smallest vehicle in the world but it couldn’t surface for a while. They stored it in the garage of a home that had burned down, an unlikely place. The bodies went deep into the ground. They feigned a vehicle accident and those soldiers got out to lend assistance. That was the last dumb move they ever made. Picked up the Hummer, a Ma Deuce, 5 cans of ammo, 3 M4/M203, 108 M433 HEDP rounds, 630-rounds of M855 and 3 sets of everything 3 soldiers wear. Their next target

was a FEMA employee, Marty wanted to play fed instead of soldier. Same basic load out, but the guy had on everything Blackhawk made under his Interceptor armor.

o

“We’d better stick to the troops, those FEMA people aren’t likely to desert.”

“The hell you say, a coward is a coward and it doesn’t matter what color of pants the guy is wearing.”

“Did you get the impression that the FEMA guys were telling the troops what to do?”

“Seemed like it, didn’t it. You have something in mind?”

“A couple of things. First, it’s a good thing we got the equipment, almost no one carried those 7.62 rifles anymore and we sort of stood out. Second, if we want to change strategy, our FEMA man could pull up in a Hummer with 3 soldiers and order another Hummer to go with him to lend support in some kind of op. The thing is that if we do that, they’ll be on to us.”

“We’d better stick with plan A. We keep the idea on the shelf as plan B.”

“Right about now they’re probably raising hell and threatening everyone with what will happen to them if they get caught deserting. Give it a few days and we’ll try to get another Hummer.”

“Why not let group 1 do an op, they’re ready?”

“We’ll do 2 on the same day, which ought to confuse them.”

“We could let group 1 do a kidnapping and we could do a plan B.”

“Which one is plan B?”

“Fred, stay awake, that’s the plan where the FEMA guy and 3 soldiers get another Hummer with 4 soldiers to go with them and they take them out.”

“What FEMA guy?”

“Marty.”

“Huh? You guys have been watching too many episodes of Battleplan. Take ‘em head on, I say.”

“Right, that’s how you got shot in the butt.”

“That was a mortar attack. Someone yelled *get your heads down* and I did. It wasn’t my head that got hit.”

“Do you understand now, Fred?”

“Yeah, Marty works for FEMA now and we’re a bunch of retreads from some long forgotten war who can’t handle it anymore and need help.”

“Close enough.”

Assuming Fred was age 19 at Khe Sanh, and the siege occurred in ‘68, then Fred was born in ‘49 and he was around 61 in 2010. The Siege of Khe Sanh lasted from January 21, 1968 through April 8, 1968. The US had 205 killed, 443 wounded, 2 MIA. The Americans held Khe Sanh throughout the siege, and were eventually officially relieved by the 2nd Cavalry on April 6th, 1968, and all fighting was over two days later.

o

“We don’t dare plant a garden.”

“Why not?”

“The people in San Jose would know someone is living here.”

“The people in San Jose would know that someone planted a garden here, but for all they know those people could be living in town.”

“Right, and the horses get hay for themselves.”

“Why don’t you knock it off with them negative waves? Why don’t you dig how beautiful it is out here? Why don’t you say something righteous and hopeful for a change?”

“They might try and set a trap to catch whoever is feeding the horses and tending the garden.”

“You might just be right, Mel, that would make a good plan C.”

“What are plans A & B?”

“Ask Fred.”

“Fred, what are plans A & B?”

“Plan A is we grab them and plan B is we grab more of them, all at once sort of by acting our age.”

A Home of Their Own – Chapter 20

The woman who made Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. a household name has died at age 92, remember Rosa Parks? Parks' moment in history began in December 1955 when she refused to give up her seat on a bus to a white man in Montgomery, Alabama. Her arrest triggered a 381-day boycott of the bus system by blacks that was organized by a young Baptist minister, the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. She was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1996 and the Congressional Gold Medal in 1999. She sat down for what she believed in. In 1955, I was 12 years old and wondered why anyone would get arrested for riding a bus. She had to leave Alabama because of all the threats. I'll never understand 'cause I'm a Yankee.

o

“How did we ever get into this mess?”

“I presume you mean the Chinese attacking the United States?”

“Maybe that too. I was referring to this country turning into a place where the people in charge thought it was ok and perfectly acceptable to put people in camps.”

“That was Franklin Roosevelt wasn't it? Right after the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor?”

Presidential Proclamation 2537 was issued on January 12, 1942, requiring aliens to report any change of address, employment, or name to the FBI. Enemy aliens were not allowed to enter restricted areas. Violators of these regulations were subject to “arrest, detention and internment for the duration of the war.”

EO 9066, signed by Roosevelt on February 18, 1942, allowed authorized military commanders to designate “military areas” at their discretion, “from which any or all persons may be excluded”. These “exclusion zones”, unlike the “alien enemy” roundups, were applicable to anyone that an authorized military commander might choose, whether citizen or non-citizen. Eventually such areas would include both the East and West Coasts, and about 1/3 of the country, and were applied to all of those of Enemy Alien Ancestry (of which the Japanese were a minority).

On March 2, 1942, General DeWitt issued Public Proclamation No. 1, informing all those of Japanese ancestry that they would, at some later point, be subject to exclusion orders from “Military Area No. 1” (essentially, the entire Pacific coast), and requiring anyone who had “enemy” ancestry to file a Change of Residence Notice if they planned to move.

On March 11, 1942, Executive Order 9095 created the Office of the Alien Property Custodian, and gave it discretionary, plenary authority over all alien property interests. Many assets were frozen, creating immediate financial difficulty for the affected aliens.

On March 24, 1942, General DeWitt began to issue exclusion orders for specific areas within "Military Area No. 1."

On March 27, 1942, General DeWitt's Proclamation No. 4 prohibited all those of Japanese ancestry from leaving "Military Area No. 1" for "any purpose until and to the extent that a future proclamation or order of this headquarters shall so permit or direct."

On May 3, 1942, General DeWitt issued Civilian Exclusion Order No. 346, ordering all people of Japanese ancestry, whether citizens or non-citizens, to report to assembly centers, where they would live until being moved to permanent "Relocation Centers." Former Supreme Court Justice Tom C. Clark, who represented the US Department of Justice in the "relocation," writes in the Epilogue to the book *Executive Order 9066: The Internment of 110,000 Japanese Americans* (written by Maisie & Richard Conrat):

The truth is – as this deplorable experience proves – that constitutions and laws are not sufficient of themselves...Despite the unequivocal language of the Constitution of the United States that the writ of habeas corpus shall not be suspended, and despite the Fifth Amendment's command that no person shall be deprived of life, liberty or property without due process of law, both of these constitutional safeguards were denied by military action under Executive Order 9066....

A key supporter of the internment was California Attorney General Earl Warren. In later years, Warren viewed his early stance on the internment as one of his greatest mistakes. He wrote in his autobiography:

I have since deeply regretted the removal order and my own testimony advocating it, because it was not in keeping with our American concept of freedom and the rights of citizens. Whenever I thought of the innocent little children who were torn from home, school friends and congenial surroundings, I was conscience-stricken.

In the aftermath of the attacks of September 11, 2001, polls have found a third or more of the US public willing to intern Arab Americans in the way in which Japanese Americans were interned during World War II. The United States has instituted Special Registration, requiring annual photographing, fingerprinting, and interviewing of all male aliens (except permanent residents of the US) from any of a group of twenty-five countries, most of them predominantly Muslim and ragheads, as well as monitoring of their movements within the US and restrictions of their right to travel. Many people are concerned that Arabs or Muslims in the US could be subjected to internment in the future, given the significant public support for such a practice and the enactment of legislation similar to the Alien Registration Act of 1940.

"How are we any different than the Japanese Americans during WW II or the Arab Americans after 9/11? Those events were a product of hysteria or mass fear. It is easier for the government to provide for and protect the American people if they're in camps. Then someone get the bright idea that it is also a good way to identify those among us

that they suspect of disloyalty or something. Maybe all the guy or gal is doing is demanding their rights. One thing leads to another and they end up building gallows.”

“It can’t happen here.”

“You’ve seen it with your own eyes, what do you mean that it can’t happen here? It’s happening right now, even as we speak. How many of those rights were eroded with the USA PATRIOT Act?”

“That was a necessary exercise by the government to protect the people of the United States.”

“Right, but then, so is this.”

“This is different.”

“Tell me how?”

“It just is.”

“Yes, because you say so.”

If they did it right they could execute plans A, B and C on the same day and really confuse the government troops and FEMA people. To do that, they needed to attract attention to the acreage, which would result in the feds setting a trap for them. Then, they could move in unison at 3 different locations. Group 1 would do plan A, they would split their force and carryout both plan B and C at the same time. Why not, they had 8 people and they only need 4 for plan B, leaving 4 at home to carry out plan C. They had the advantage, provided to them by Surefire and Marty. They also needed a bucket full of luck.

o

“Want a can for the model 70?”

“Wouldn’t mind but I don’t have any subsonic ammo for it.”

“It will work on a .308.”

“I thought you passed all of those out to group 1.”

“I did, but Fred and my M14s weren’t part of the deal.”

“I have some ammo I got from SRT Arms.”

“What is it?”

“7.62 Thumper (TM). It’s high performance, 180 grain “sub-sonic” .308 is built entirely from premium, match grade components and is manufactured to strict tolerances. Combines excellent (MOA) accuracy with maximum payload. Supposed to have a ballistic match +/- 1” at 100 yards.”

“We’ll loan you the M14s and the two Surefire 762 clones I made.”

“Clones?”

“Couldn’t duplicate the baffle material.”

“I have extra baffle sets.”

“What? Why?”

“They’re only guaranteed 30,000-rounds.”

“The barrel life is only about 9,000 rounds.”

“True but any competent gunsmith could fit a barrel. Beside it was only \$450 for a 500-round case.”

“So what’s the plan M14/M1As with suppressors and subsonic ammo?”

“And the Browning’s. What would they send, a squad?”

“They can’t be expecting much trouble. They probably think they’re dealing with some strong willed vegetarians who wouldn’t turn themselves in because they’d have to eat meat.”

“I’ll send Rudy to fill in group 1. When should we do this?”

“You’re going to have to leak info to the feds to get them here. Maybe a good spirited citizen tipping off one of those patrols they run?”

“Friday?”

“Good, they might be tired from a week of daily patrols.”

“What will they have for equipment?”

“2 SAWs, 4-6 riflemen, 2 grenadiers, and a squad leader. Could have a FEMA guy and an L-T. It would be a fairly routine operation.”

“Order of battle?”

“Machine guns and grenadiers, then the leadership and finally the riflemen.”

o

“I sure hate taking out Americans.”

“I was reading last night, trying to justify what we’re doing to myself. Here’s what I found: Article VI §2 of the Constitution of the United States says:

‘This Constitution, and the Laws of the United States which shall be made in Pursuance thereof; and all Treaties made, or which shall be made, under the Authority of the United States, shall be the supreme Law of the Land; and the Judges in every State shall be bound thereby, any Thing in the Constitution or Laws of any State to the Contrary notwithstanding.’

Article VI §3 says:

‘The Senators and Representatives before mentioned, and the Members of the several State Legislatures, and all executive and judicial Officers, both of the United States and of the several States, shall be bound by Oath or Affirmation, to support this Constitution; but no religious Test shall ever be required as a Qualification to any Office or public Trust under the United States.’ Every federal employee took an oath to support and defend that and they’re in violation the 4th and 5th Amendments and Habeas Corpus. No Executive Order can override the Constitution for very long, that’s illegal.”

“They’ll be wearing body armor.”

“That’s why you’re going to have to take head shots. It’s worse using the subsonic .308 ammo I bought.”

“We need to practice.”

“Use the suppressors and no one will hear you.”

“If we have your M1As, what are you carrying?”

“The M4/M203s, we’re soldiers and FEMA, remember?”

“What about body armor for us?”

“You can use what you get from the soldiers you kill. You’re going to end up with some nice weapons, too. These guys will shoot back, don’t miss.”

“Why did you give the order of battle you did? Shouldn’t we take out command first?”

“A M249 puts out around 200 rounds in about 20 seconds but even with measured fire, not over a minute and a 40mm grenade could ruin your entire day. First you stop the heavy stuff, and then you take out the leaders. Maybe that’s how the manual says to do it and maybe not. At most the officers and NCOs will have rifles and more likely pistols. The FEMA guy may or may not be able to shoot, assume he can. With any kind of luck, you can take out the machine gunners and grenadiers and hit the leadership before they even know what going down. But, remember the first rule of combat, no battle plan ever survives the first shot being fired.”

“We’re going to spread out with one in the attic two in the barn and one in the shelter.”

“As long as you don’t bunch up.”

o

Believe it or not, it went smoother than silk. Group one caught a Hummer with two soldiers in it and captured the Hummer, Mk-19 and buried the two troopers after they were expediently dispatched. Marty ran roughshod over some guys up in San Jose and they were lured to a location and deployed to wait. Moments later, the soldiers were dead and the Marty, Maria, Jon and Rudy even avoided getting blood on the gear. Out at the acreage, based on the rumor they spread, the government brought in a squad with the 2 machineguns, 2 grenadiers and 4 riflemen. The FMEA guy was the one giving the orders to the L-T and he passed them on to the Noncom who looked ready to kill the civilian.

The Sgt. was po’d because of how the FEMA guy and the L-T placed the troops. In his opinion, they were way too exposed. After they’d gotten settled in and Fred, the shelter guy, who refused to let anyone touch his new in the box M14, talked to Mel and Eleanor in the barn and Rosemary in the house. Once he had the information he needed, he told Mel to let him know when the soldiers got sloppy. That came 4-5 hours later and Fred open the door to the shelter about 8”. The soldiers stood to see who was coming out of the shelter.

Pfutt, Pfutt, Pfutt, Pfutt and the machine gunners and grenadiers were down. Pfutt, Pfutt, Pfutt and the FEMA rep, the L-T and the Sgt. were down. Pfutt, Pfutt, Pfutt, Pfutt, Pfutt, Pfutt took care of the riflemen. The second shots were rushed and the third even more so. Fred finished raising the door and made sure the 11 men were dead. Then, they stripped the bodies and dumped them in the hole they had dug the day before.

A Home of Their Own – Chapter 21

The vehicles were moved to the fire station and stored. They acquired 2 with M240s and another with a Ma Deuce.

“Not bad, anyone hear from group 1?”

“They came by in their new Hummer with the Mk-19. Brought those out in ‘Nam, you know.”

“How did you do?”

“Someone needs to fill in the hole so we don’t have to smell the stink. We got 3 of those fancy armored Hummers, 2 30 cal and 1 Ma Deuce. We stored them at the firehouse. Plus we got 7 M4s, 3 with M203s, 2 M9s and 2 M249s.”

“How did we do on ammo?”

“1,000 per machinegun and 72 grenades per M203.”

“Who had the extra M203?”

“The Sergeant. How did you do?”

“1 M-1114 with a Ma Deuce and 4 rifles with M203s. Average load out of ammo.”

“So we have 5 Hummers and group 1 has 1?”

“Yep. We have 2 with M240s, 3 with 50 cal and one with an Mk-19.”

“We can field a couple of squads. Are we going to keep going or lay low?”

“I think maybe we should tend garden for a while. We’re going to need to set a lookout for when they come back to check on this squad.”

“How do we clean the blood off the body armor?”

“Very carefully. It was determined that the penetration resistance of Kevlar was degraded when wet. The bullet resistant properties of the fabric also diminished upon exposure to ultraviolet light, including sunlight. Dry-cleaning agents and bleach also had a negative effect on the antiballistic properties of the fabric, as did repeated washing. To protect against these problems, the vest was designed with waterproofing, as well as with fabric coverings to prevent exposure to sunlight and other degrading agents.”

The 4 families at the acreage were getting the equipment they needed to carry on a campaign against FEMA and the military, albeit the hard way. They gave one Hummer

with a .30 cal and a second with a .50 cal to group 1. The ladies took care of the babies; handled lookout duties and the men hoed the garden. They occasionally had to disappear when someone came to see what was going on at the acreage. They allowed weeds to grow on the periphery of the garden and from a distance it appeared abandoned.

Group 1 continued the on-again, off-again kidnappings until they had taken out 6 more patrols with vehicles. They had more carrying capacity than they had people. It was time to start a new campaign and try a different approach. When the disappearances had gotten significant, patrols always included 4 soldiers. Before very long, everyone was fully equipped with the full complement of equipment.

o

“What would you say to attacking the camps?”

“Which one?”

“Camp 3?”

“Those should be some po’d people. Let’s go for it.”

“We will need to recon again and see what they’ve changed.”

“Good idea, Jon. Did you look in those Combat Lifesaver kits those guys were carrying? There are a couple of new things in here. They have the TraumaDex powder and an IV to stop bleeding. There was a pamphlet from Medafor, Inc., which says their products are a new addition to military trauma field kits.”

“Why would they have an ad in a military combat lifesaver bag?”

“Maybe the guy saw the pamphlet and added it to his bag?”

“We will need to recon again and see what they’ve changed.”

“I forgot what you suggested, got sidetracked. Fine, when do you want to go?”

“Are we done talking about first aid kits?”

“Yep.”

“Good, saddle up.”

“Are we taking the horses?”

“Giving me a hard time Rudy? It’s an expression. It means, let’s go.”

“Where?”

“Camp 3.”

“Got your binoculars?”

o

Rudy was stalling; he hadn't wanted to go back to camp 3. He had seen the graves and the place really gave him the creeps. It was the same as before, a pair of guards on every corner and a pair in between every corner, a total of 16, all well-armed. It wasn't likely anyone would try to escape, they had to negotiate concertina, barbed wired just to get to the guards in the middle with the dogs. That was the real kicker, the dogs. Just like Rusty, unfortunately. Rusty was full grown and his training really showed. So did the training these dogs had. If they had to take out the dogs, and what other choice did they have, that would take a minimum of 20 people, each with their own target. That would take care of the perimeter, but there were more guards inside maintaining order.

“How many do you make out inside?”

“I can't really tell, some may be sleeping. We used to run 4 on and 8 off and I'd guess they do too. If there are 20 we see, figure 40 more to cover the perimeter and maybe 3 dozen inside.”

“Ok, 100 in round numbers. We can put together 24 people, can we do it?”

“We'll have two advantages, surprise on the perimeter guards and a firestorm on the billets. We can discuss it with Marty and Fred, but Marty will say yes regardless and Fred won't care one way or the other. It's going to be up to the other group, Rudy.”

“I think timing has to be perfect, one slip up, one shot getting fired and we're done.”

“Let's get back and lay it out for our two and if they agree, go see group 1.”

“Is it dangerous?”

“No more than what the 4 of you did here when you were up against 10, Mel. Marty says he can equip 24 people with a suppressor of some kind, so we can take out the perimeter, both guards and dogs, without causing a ruckus. They don't have any equipment we don't have, Hummers with machine guns, rifles and the like. We can come at them from 3 directions and pour fire into their tents. We'll have an edge, at least.”

Mel, Rosemary and Eleanor had participated in the clearing of the ambush, but the piles of vomit really told the story. They'd tossed pails of water to try and clear their messes,

but hadn't really succeeded. It wasn't fair leaving 3 women and Fred to handle 11 people, but in the end, that's what it had come down to. Fred had waited patiently while they settled down, and then the 4 of them had stripped the bodies and dragged them to the hole. All three ladies bathed and put on clean clothes that day, like cleaning up would somehow change what they'd done.

As it was, Mel and Maria would have to accompany Jon, Rudy, Marty and Fred just to get the numbers up. It was agreed that they'd take 24 people, 6 from the acreage and 18 of the 30-some people from group 1. They set the date for Friday night/Saturday morning around 0145. That was just before a guard change and maybe they could get the second shift of guards when they came on duty. The folks from group had suggested that they take out the guards and take their places. Minutes later when the replacements showed up, they could cut them down too, eliminating 40 of the estimated 100 people and maybe 4 more dogs. They never had sighted the seniors from group 2.

o

"We have the front of the camp, Mel, Sandy and I will take the center and Rudy and Maria the left. You rusty warriors can handle the right."

"Did he say rustic? Yep, that's sure us all right," Fred laughed.

Attacking in teams of two or 3 where a dog was involved, they moved into position. One guy from group 1, Sandy, joined Jon and Mel and on a radio signal, a series of pops was almost heard. The soldiers/FEMA people and dogs were down and they rushed to move the bodies out of the light. They assumed the posts left vacant by the ambush with the third person staying with the bodies. That's when the plan fell apart, they knew when the shift changes occurred but had never observed a nighttime shift change. During the day, the soldiers and FEMA people walked to their posts, after sunset, they rode in a truck. The new shift got out and the driver waited for Jon and Sandy to board. When they didn't, he yelled at them and all hell broke loose.

Mel had seen the truck and quietly slipped away and got behind the .50 cal in their Hummer. When she saw the situation collapsing around Jon and Sandy, she opened up. Every one of the other pretend guards rushed to the Hummers to bring their guns to bear. Mel took good care of the truck and Jon and Sandy were safe. The clatter of the machine gun woke the entire camp and soldiers and FEMA people started pouring out of the tents. They were able to begin returning fire before the guns on the other Hummers could be manned.

The good news was that the Hummers were manned before all of the soldiers and FEMA people inside the camp could react effectively. The bad news was some of the attackers were wounded. If it hadn't been for the body armor they wore, several would have been killed. The camp personnel also had M249's and for a few minutes, it was anyone's guess which side would prevail. The answer was Ma Deuce was in charge, assisted by her newer cousins, the Mk-19 and the M240s. The other bad news was that

they wouldn't dare try the same approach again and they still had 2 camps in San Jose that they wanted to clear out.

"Anyone going to die on us?"

"I hope not."

"That doesn't sound too encouraging."

"Do you want to help? If not, leave me alone to take care of these people; here, hold this IV."

"Can I help, Jon?"

"Mel if you can hold this IV for Rudy, I go see about the people we managed to rescue."

It turned out that the US Army provided the necessary means to help all of the wounded. The new, modified CLS aid bag had new types of bandages, TraumaDex and a coagulating IV. In addition, they contained the normal saline injection used in Iraq to combat dehydration. (I looked and the contents of the new bag aren't on the net where I can find them.)

"Collect all of the weapons and vehicles. Is someone making sure they're all dead? How many people did we manage to release?"

"Everything is covered, Jon, we found 40 people. When Rudy is done tending to the wounds, he needs to look at them."

"We can't take the time, load them into 5-ton trucks and get them to Morgan Hill. We can sort it out when we get there. Hurry, would you, camp 2 must have heard the shooting."

o

"Where do we take them?"

"The hospital is abandoned, take them there."

"Didn't you clear that place out?"

"I couldn't carry everything and never got back. There are still things we can use. None of the wounds is life threatening and once we replace fluids, debride the wounds and bandage them, I load them up on antibiotics and we can send them home to heal."

"What about the prisoners we released?"

“Jon, I checked, they’re dehydrated and malnourished. We can hydrate with normal saline mixed with D5W, IVT because the hospital has some bags of it and give them a light bolus of B-6 and B-12. I’m not a doctor and don’t you forget it. We have plenty of Gatorade to use for ORT; that will help with the dehydration and if we get some decent food into them and they should eventually be ok. We’ll keep them on All B plus C for a while.”

“Jon, I’ll run down to acreage and get a couple of kettles of soup going. Maria can come with me and help. By the way, I’m not going on any more of your missions.”

“Ok Mel, when the soup is done, bring it to group 1’s tract, they have plenty of empty housing.” Take Marty and Fred with you to help.”

“What are you going to be doing?”

“Whatever Rudy tells me to.”

“We’ll be over about 6am with the soup.”

“That should work, what are you going to make?”

“Jewish penicillin.” (Chicken soup.)

“She’s right Jon, we have to start them with a light broth.”

“At least they don’t have to eat hospital food.”

“Most hospital food is good for you, it just tastes lousy.”

o

Jewish penicillin: Chicken soup. If not really a form of penicillin, chicken soup may, in fact, have some therapeutic merit.

A study published in the journal *Chest* demonstrated that chicken soup may contain substances with beneficial activity including an anti-inflammatory effect that could ease the symptoms of colds and other upper respiratory infections. Chicken soup was found to inhibit neutrophil migration providing a basis for an anti-inflammatory activity. “Undoubtedly, the in vivo effects of chicken soup include more than the effects on neutrophils,” the researchers wrote. “The warm liquid, particularly when sipped, can stimulate nasal clearance and may improve upper respiratory tract symptoms.” (Rennard BO, Ertl RF, Grossman GL, et al. Chicken soup inhibits neutrophil chemotaxis in vitro. *Chest*. 2000;118:1150-1157.) It should be added that to benefit from Jewish penicillin, one need not be Jewish.

Recent research had shown the IV Therapy isn't much better for dehydration than Oral Rehydration Therapy. When missionary men first began dragging Gatorade to stores in the late '60s, they described the stuff as 'bottled sweat. The drink is intended to rehydrate and to replenish the carbohydrates (using sucrose, glucose, and fructose) and electrolytes (sodium and potassium salts) depleted during aerobic exercise (particularly in the debilitating Florida climate). Gatorade was created by Dr. Robert Cade and Dr. Dana Shires at the University of Florida in 1966 and named for the university's football team, the Gators. Pepsico bought Quaker Oats just to get the Gatorade brand.

Vitamins B-6, Pyridoxine and B-12 Cyanocobalamin are important to metabolism of foods, especially carbohydrates. B-9 is Folic acid. These vitamins are often depleted in alcoholics. Chicken soup is mostly broth and is good for what ails you. When a person is malnourished, you start with a liquid diet, move to soft foods and eventually they get a full, bland diet. It makes them appreciate the steak when they finally get it. Got to give the tummy time to adjust or it can't handle the food. All B plus C is often recommended by doctors to balance a diet. It's just another darned pill.

Not that it has anything to do with the story, but my ulcers are still bleeding, my low fat diet is working, HDL: 39, LDL: 78, Cholesterol 117, Triglycerides 133, and blood sugar is elevated (148) 'cause I can't afford the Advantia @ \$5 a pop, Hemoglobin a1c ~ 6.8 and the doc isn't happy 'cause I'm getting fat, again, and I'm still lazy/crazy. Does every pill have to cost \$4-\$5 each? Couldn't he prescribe just one pill I could afford? No, I shouldn't have been a doctor, I'd tell 'em to take 2 Ecotrin and call me next week. My CBC is low and I don't care. If you're a boozer, your body will get even, if you live that long. Drink too much coffee and you'll end up with allergies, that's a fact, Jack! Don't go to church and when you get to the pearly gates, St. Pete will just say, 'take the down car...' It's just a shame that you don't figure it out until it's too darn late.

o

A score of bandages later, a huge pot of chicken soup and the 40 detainees were able to relate their stories. Most of them were people who simply refused to be pushed. They knew their rights and wouldn't kowtow to FEMA and the Army. So, they were moved from camp 1 to camp 2 and, eventually, camp 3. All they wanted was a gun and they'd fight the folks who'd seem to have forgotten their oath of office. Weapons weren't in short supply, not anymore. Let them remain nameless; just give them the label Patriot. Nurse them back to health, give 'em guns and ammo and perhaps some of the Hummers, they'll kick tails and not bother with the names. Mel never went out on another raid/attack on the camps. She stayed at the acreage most of the time and raised Angelina and John Paul. She tended the garden and began canning food for the winter. The Patriots blew a few bridges on 101, blocking the road south.

A Home of Their Own – Chapter 22

You read this one, right?

By Lawrence B. Wilkerson, who served as chief of staff to Secretary of State Colin L. Powell from 2002 to 2005.

In President Bush's first term, some of the most important decisions about US national security – including vital decisions about postwar Iraq – were made by a secretive, little-known cabal. It was made up of a very small group of people led by Vice President Dick Cheney and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld.

When I first discussed this group in a speech last week at the New America Foundation in Washington, my comments caused a significant stir because I had been chief of staff to then-Secretary of State Colin Powell between 2002 and 2005.

But it's absolutely true. I believe that the decisions of this cabal were sometimes made with the full and witting support of the president and sometimes with something less. More often than not, then-national security advisor Condoleezza Rice was simply steamrolled by this cabal.

Its insular and secret workings were efficient and swift – not unlike the decision-making one would associate more with a dictatorship than a democracy. This furtive process was camouflaged neatly by the dysfunction and inefficiency of the formal decision-making process, where decisions, if they were reached at all, had to wend their way through the bureaucracy, with its dissenters, obstructionists and “guardians of the turf.”

But the secret process was ultimately a failure. It produced a series of disastrous decisions and virtually ensured that the agencies charged with implementing them would not or could not execute them well.

I watched these dual decision-making processes operate for four years at the State Department. As chief of staff for 27 months, I had a door adjoining the secretary of State's office. I read virtually every document he read. I read the intelligence briefings and spoke daily with people from all across government.

I knew that what I was observing was not what Congress intended when it passed the 1947 National Security Act. The law created the National Security Council – consisting of the president, vice president and the secretaries of State and Defense – to make sure the nation's vital national security decisions were thoroughly vetted. The NSC has often been expanded, depending on the president in office, to include the CIA director, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Treasury secretary and others, and it has accumulated a staff of sometimes more than 100 people.

But many of the most crucial decisions from 2001 to 2005 were not made within the traditional NSC process.

Scholars and knowledgeable critics of the US decision-making process may rightly say, so what? Haven't all of our presidents in the last half-century failed to conform to the usual process at one time or another? Isn't it the president's prerogative to make decisions with whomever he pleases? Moreover, can he not ignore whomever he pleases? Why should we care that President Bush gave over much of the critical decision-making to his vice president and his secretary of Defense?

Both as a former academic and as a person who has been in the ring with the bull, I believe that there are two reasons we should care. First, such departures from the process have in the past led us into a host of disasters, including the last years of the Vietnam War, the national embarrassment of Watergate (and the first resignation of a president in our history), the Iran-Contra scandal and now the ruinous foreign policy of George W. Bush.

But a second and far more important reason is that the nature of both governance and crisis has changed in the modern age.

From managing the environment to securing sufficient energy resources, from dealing with trafficking in human beings to performing peacekeeping missions abroad, governing is vastly more complicated than ever before in human history.

Further, the crises the US government confronts today are so multifaceted, so complex, so fast-breaking – and almost always with such incredible potential for regional and global ripple effects – that to depart from the systematic decision-making process laid out in the 1947 statute invites disaster.

Discounting the professional experience available within the federal bureaucracy – and ignoring entirely the inevitable but often frustrating dissent that often arises therein – makes for quick and painless decisions. But when government agencies are confronted with decisions in which they did not participate and with which they frequently disagree, their implementation of those decisions is fractured, uncoordinated and inefficient. This is particularly the case if the bureaucracies called upon to execute the decisions are in strong competition with one another over scarce money, talented people, “turf” or power.

It takes firm leadership to preside over the bureaucracy. But it also takes a willingness to listen to dissenting opinions. It requires leaders who can analyze, synthesize, ponder and decide.

The administration's performance during its first four years would have been even worse without Powell's damage control. At least once a week, it seemed, Powell trooped over to the Oval Office and cleaned the dog poop off the carpet. He held a youthful, inexperienced president's hand. He told him everything would be all right because he, the Secretary of State, would fix it. And he did – everything from a serious crisis with China when a US reconnaissance aircraft was struck by a Chinese F-8 fighter

jet in April 2001, to the secretary's constant reassurances to European leaders following the bitter breach in relations over the Iraq war. It wasn't enough, of course, but it helped.

Today, we have a president whose approval rating is 38% and a vice president who speaks only to Rush Limbaugh and assembled military forces. We have a secretary of Defense presiding over the death-by-a-thousand-cuts of our overstretched armed forces (no surprise to ignored dissenters such as former Army Chief of Staff Gen. Eric Shinseki or former Army Secretary Thomas White).

It's a disaster. Given the choice, I'd choose a frustrating bureaucracy over an efficient cabal every time.

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Just because I'll vote against the Democrat candidate in November 2008 doesn't mean that candidate won't get elected. It doesn't mean that the Democrats won't regain control of the House and Senate. The problem with wars like Vietnam and Iraq is that there doesn't seem to be a clear goal, regardless of what anyone may say, and Democracy isn't something that can be exported. We have what we have for many reasons and it worked for a very long while. Not everyone thinks it's working now, but November of 2008 will show everyone that it doesn't matter which party is in power. We need a moderate leadership that doesn't try to cure all of the woes of the country or the world. I have a few references to prove the point, ask the Persians, Egyptians, Greeks or Romans, Great Britain or any of the once top world powers. *Rule Britannia! Britannia rules the waves, 100 years ago. Columbia, Columbia, to glory arise, the queen of the world and the child of the skies.*

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Strict constructionism is a philosophy of Judicial interpretation and legal philosophy that limits judicial interpretation to the meanings of the actual words and phrases used in law, and not on other sources or inferences. Adherents look strictly at the text in question rather than relying either on legislative intent (as gleaned from contemporaneous commentaries or legislative debate) or on metaphysical ideas such as natural law. Two of the doctrine's most forceful proponents have been Justice Hugo Black and the late Chief Justice William Rehnquist.

The underlying argument behind strict constructionism is that if a legislature truly wants to enact a particular law, they are capable of writing it down in plain English and passing it and it is not the job of the judiciary to reconstruct what the legislature's intent could have been. Thus, for example, Justice Scalia refuses to look at committee reports that often accompany bills to the House or Senate floor.

Supreme Court Justice Hugo Black wrote in *Reid v. Covert*, 354US1, 5 -6 (1957), "[t]he United States is entirely a creature of the Constitution. Its power and authority have no other source."

“I, AB, do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which I am about to enter. So help me God.”

“I, AB, do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; and that I will obey the orders of the President of the United States and the orders of the officers appointed over me, according to regulations and the Uniform Code of Military Justice. So help me God.”

Article 92. Failure To Obey Order Or Regulation

Any person subject to this chapter who –

- (1) violates or fails to obey any lawful general order or regulation;
- (2) having knowledge of any other lawful order issued by any member of the armed forces, which it is his duty to obey, fails to obey the order; or
- (3) is derelict in the performance of his duties; shall be punished as a court-martial may direct.

Who determines whether an order is a lawful order?

A superior’s order is presumed to be lawful and is disobeyed at the subordinate’s peril; nevertheless, to sustain this presumption, the order must relate to military duty, which includes all activities reasonably necessary to accomplish a military mission, or safeguard or promote the morale, discipline, and usefulness of members of a command and directly connected with the maintenance of good order in the service; moreover, the order may not conflict with the statutory or constitutional rights of the person receiving the order and must be a specific mandate to do or not to do a specific act; in sum, an order is presumed lawful, provided it has a valid military purpose and is a clear, specific, narrowly drawn mandate. *United States v. Moore 58MJ466.*

I’m a soldier and I just followed orders... the Eichmann defense. During the whole trial, Eichmann insisted that he was only “following orders.” You’re damned if you do and damned if you don’t. And now that it is an all-volunteer military, it’s hard to claim that you didn’t know what you were getting into, which you probably didn’t.

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The US in the aftermath of the preemptive strike wasn't the only place in the world with problems. It seemed that one new member of the nuclear club was insisting that something be done to solve the stigma on the face of the Middle East:

"There is no doubt that the new wave (of attacks) in Palestine will wipe off this stigma (Israel) from the face of the Islamic world," Ahmadinejad told students Wednesday during a Tehran conference called "The World without Zionism."

"Anybody who recognizes Israel will burn in the fire of the Islamic nation's fury, (while) any (Islamic leader) who recognizes the Zionist regime means he is acknowledging the surrender and defeat of the Islamic world," Ahmadinejad said.

Ahmadinejad also repeated the words of the founder of Iran's Islamic revolution, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, who called for the destruction of Israel.

Israel denied having nuclear weapons. In fact with the attack on the US, they were basically standing alone. The attack several months earlier had rained fire and death on more than 4 score US population centers. Not coincidentally, the Israelis armed their F-15 E/F strike bombers with (what kind of bombs) and they remained that way. The Israeli ground missile systems included the Jericho 1, 2 and 3 missiles with ranges of 500km, 1,300km and 11,500km, respectively. By the late 1990s the US Intelligence Community estimated that Israel possessed between 75-130 weapons, based on production estimates. The stockpile would certainly include warheads for mobile Jericho-1 and Jericho-2 missiles, as well as bombs for Israeli aircraft, and may include other tactical nuclear weapons of various types. Some published estimates even claimed that Israel might have as many as 400 nuclear weapons by the late 1990s. The Jericho 3 entered service in 2008.

Based on plausible upper and lower bounds of the operating practices at the reactor, if the power of the Dimona reactor remained at 75 MW, Israel could have produced enough plutonium for at least 100 nuclear weapons, but probably not significantly more than 200 weapons by 2005, with the stockpile growing to at least 125 but probably fewer than 250 weapons by around 2010. Do the Jericho missiles have nuclear warheads? No way, Jose, Israel doesn't have any nuclear weapons, but I have a brown cow that gives chocolate milk. Israel has about 90 of the various models of the F-15. The 25 F-15Is operational since 1999 [and the 100 F-16Is] were procured first and foremost to deal with the Iranian threat. In August 2003 the Israeli Air Force demonstrated the strategic capability to strike far-off targets such as Iran [which is 1,300 kilometers away], by flying three F-15 jets to Poland 1,600 nautical miles away. After they celebrated that country's air force's 85th birthday, on their return trip, the IAF warplanes staged a fly-past over the Auschwitz death camp.

In 1980, the IAF embarked upon the initial planning phase of the project for upgrading the Kurnas. On July 15th 1987 the first prototype of the improved plane took off. It was dubbed the Kurnas 2000.

Kurnas 2000, which entered service in the IAF on April 9th 1989, was different from the original Phantom mostly in its avionics. "Although they look practically identical, the Kurnas 2000 is a completely different plane", said Lt. Col. A., commander of a Phantom squadron, who was being interviewed by the IAF Magazine. "The avionics make it a completely new aircraft. The avionics are, in effect, the heart of the plane, and the upgrading project basically amounted to a heart transplant; the Phantom's heart was replaced with a much stronger one".

The conversion plan included replacing the plane's original radar with a new one. Norden, an American company, developed the APG-76 radar especially for this purpose - and according to the IAF's specifications. This radar, considered to be the best of its kind, uses advanced technologies that were originally developed for the US Navy's future attack plane, the A-12 Avenger II - a project that has since been cancelled.

The APG is a Synthetic Aperture Multi-Mission Radar System, which constructs a representation of the terrain by sending electromagnetic waves towards it. The great advantage of this mode of operation, compared with systems that are based on optical equipment, is that the picture quality remains good, even in bad weather. The radar is currently an exclusive feature of the Kurnas 2000, but in view of its superb performance, the USAF is considering a special pod mounted version for its F-16's.

The Kurnas 2000 also boasts a Kaiser wide-angle heads-up display, considered the best in the world. The wide angle means that the system effectively covers 60% of the pilot's forward view - twice the angle covered by other systems. The displays, located directly in front of the pilot, show vital measurements like speed, altitude, direction of flight, etc., as well as information regarding the operation of weapons systems.

The multifunction displays are one of the most important improvements in the Kurnas 2000's cockpit. The WSO, who is in charge of operating the planes avionics and weapon systems, sees the data pertaining to both systems on two color displays. A screen in the forward section of the cockpit shows the pilot the information he needs, and can be toggled to mirror the WSO's screen. The multifunction displays greatly improve cockpit ergonomics, and ease much of the work burden on the two-crew members - especially during combat operations. The Israelis aren't known for junking things that still have a useful life. Even though they field F-15I Strike Eagles and F-16I Falcons, they also fly everything they have that has wings and can still fly.

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So while in the greater San Jose area, a small group of rebels were trying to combat a government that was full of itself, in a far off land ½ a world away, other forces were at work trying to cleanse the Middle East of the Zionist Scourge. Israel is a small country, but what they lacked in land mass, they accommodated for in ferocity, a lesson not missed by Egypt, Jordan and Syria. Iraq was embroiled in the ongoing civil war, described before. It was everyone against everyone at this stage of the battle. Iran had acquired missiles from North Korea or China or both. Maybe some of those reactor

technicians spoke Russian, but probably not, the Iranian were very devout Shi'a Muslims (89%).

Iran's economy is marked by a bloated, inefficient state sector, over reliance on the oil sector, and statist policies that create major distortions throughout. Most economic activity is controlled by the state. Private sector activity is typically small-scale - workshops, farming, and services. President Khatami has continued to follow the market reform plans of former President Rafsanjani, with limited progress. Relatively high oil prices in recent years have enabled Iran to amass some \$30 billion in foreign exchange reserves, but have not eased economic hardships such as high unemployment and inflation. The proportion of the economy devoted to the development of weapons of mass destruction remains a contentious issue with leading Western nations, which no longer included the US. Mahmoud Ahmadinejad replaced Khatami on August 3, 2005. He was a real hardliner.

The US Navy was busy defending the home shores, the Army assisting FEMA with 'recovery operations' and the Marines were off floating around with the Navy. The real problem with some of the new nuclear powered vessels is that the only thing that forces them to port is stores, as in biscuits and gravy. Didn't the song say the Navy gets the gravy and the Army gets the beans, beans, beans, beans...?

As long as you could resupply a SSBN, it could stay at sea. Ask yourself if you really wanted a bunch of guys who had been floating around in a coffin for 12 straight months protecting your shores. You can land a C-130 on a carrier; it's been done before. A C-130 can carry a lot of gravy, but why would you want to? Desperate times call for desperate measures.

The bigger problem proved to be getting fuel for the Cruisers, Destroyers and other ships, the ones that weren't nuclear powered. Diesel Fuel Marine was burned in the LM2500 gas turbine engines. Specifically, JP-5 and or F-76. GE had modified an aircraft engine to power the ships and the engines were used on the Oliver Hazard Perry class frigates, the Arleigh Burke class DDGs and the Ticonderoga class CGs. The proposed new Zumwalt class DDs was totally electric. The Zumwalt DD-21 was scheduled to be commissioned in 2011 so it probably wouldn't happen.

"Leave? Sailor, you'll get leave when we hit homeport and not before. Think of it this way; when you get out of the Navy, they'll owe you 120 days accumulated leave."

Instead of the world settling down and trying to recover from the exchange between China and the US, things were only getting worse. The Middle East was likely to start spouting mushrooms any day now. Maybe Rudy had been 100% correct and all of the first 4 seals had been broken. Famine had followed in the US for people who couldn't locate or grow their own food. And Death was all around them. They were even responsible for some of it. A single soldier might not risk disobeying an order, but if the entire group agreed, they could have mutinied, another violation of the UCMJ.

A Home of Their Own – Chapter 23

“They loaded up the folks in camp 1 onto buses and transported them out of the area.”

“Good riddance, what’s the story on camp 2?”

“I figure that’s next.”

“Is everyone recovered enough to fight?”

“Several of them have been asking when we were going to liberate camp 2.”

“How about late tonight or early tomorrow morning?”

“That should work, I figured they have to drop the people off and come back with the busses to transport them.”

“Because camp 1 is empty, maybe we could use the same approach.”

“I don’t think that would be too good of an idea. We have enough of the Hummers and crew served weapons; let’s go for a full-blown attack. It will be quicker, cleaner and run less risk.”

“Has anyone been listening to the ham bands?”

“No Mel, what do you hear?”

“There is a brouhaha stirring in the Middle East. I picked up some hams who were discussing what they’d heard on BBC.”

“The Middle East? Who cares?”

“Jon, the Plain of Megiddo is in the Middle East. Maybe God really did tell John how it was all going to end.”

“Then we have 1,000-years and I’m not going to worry about it, Rudy. It will be enough keeping everyone fed and secure. Who is going to be in charge of the operation tonight?”

“We’ll let the 40 people we released organize it, Jon. They have been in camp 2 and have an idea how it’s organized and runs. We can provide them support.”

“The two of you should spend more time on the radio. I’ve been hearing things from all over the US. A major revolt is underway; FEMA and the military have really stirred up the survivors. They’ve been trying to herd everyone into camps and there has been much resistance.”

“Good, the framers got it right.”

“What do you mean?”

“You’ll have to remember your history, Mel. The country started out with a Revolution against the King of England. The framers allowed for the possibility that our government could get too burdensome. It explains, in part, why they included the Bill of Rights in the original Constitution as ratified. Then for the next 230 some years, government slowly eroded those rights. I think it’s about time and in view of the situation around this land of ours, I’d expect to see a movement back to the Constitution.”

“A second revolution?”

“A restoration. People know what did and what didn’t work. I’d envision that the 10th Amendment would perhaps become the most important, ‘The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.’ Have you ever seen a copy of the United States Code Annotated?”

“Are you advocating a revolution?”

“No, just making observations about what you’re telling us.”

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The attack on camp 2 went smoothly, they had the small guard force seriously outnumbered and they managed to free about 200 dissenters. With the weapons they acquired from the attack on camp 3 and then on camp 2, nearly everyone was armed. They had adequate supplies for defending themselves but not for carrying the contest to other locales. The 240-odd survivors of camps 2 and 3 relocated to Morgan Hill and occupied the available housing; there wasn’t a shortage. The groups formed the Morgan Hill Militia to keep the community safe from all enemies, foreign and domestic, probably, mostly domestic. They didn’t concern themselves with things occurring outside of their immediate area.

In the Middle East, Iran and Syria attacked Israel, Iran with missiles and Syria with tanks. Iran ceased to exist as a nation; the Israelis did have nuclear weapons after all. Syria ceased to exist as a nation, in for a penny, in for a pound. Saudi Arabia ceased to exist as a nation because they funded the entire thing. Any country that even looked like they were going to attack Israel ceased to exist. The civil war in Iraq paused and the Iraqis wanted to attack Israel, but they couldn’t agree on anything. Nostradamus had suggested that the population of the earth had until almost the year 4,000; maybe he wasn’t so smart after all.

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Do you remember when the LA Times reported:

Most Syrians feel stuck between two unappealing options. "Everybody is frustrated," said one student at the University of Damascus, "because we hate George Bush, but we also know that the regime is guilty."

Lately, tensions have been rising between the two. US officials say terrorists have been allowed to slip across the Syrian border into Iraq. And Tuesday, Bush said he had not ruled out military action if Syria failed to cooperate with the ongoing investigation into Hariri's assassination.

More than anything else, Syrians do not want to become the next Iraq, which they see as a case of outright aggression and murder, not as the liberation of an oppressed people or the march of democracy. Among the most common signs at the rally were: "We are not Iraq" and "Stay away America." Syrians want change, but this does not mean that they want invasion.

Dissatisfaction with the current regime does not translate into support for the West. In fact, there is general outrage in Syria regarding the Mehlis report, which is viewed as politically motivated. As expected, high-ranking Syrian officials were implicated in the Hariri assassination, including Asef Shawkat, the brother-in-law of Assad. Mehlis portrayed the Syrian government as small, insular and criminal.

Rightly or wrongly, many Syrians consider the report to be a mere US-sponsored justification for war. At Monday's rally, one placard I saw depicted a caricatured President Bush as a ventriloquist, with Mehlis as his dummy.

Assad agreed with the Iranians to attack Israel. Wasn't his best decision ever, let me tell you. The UK and France managed somehow to avoid a war, good for them, for a change. They had a greater common enemy, the 2nd most powerful nuclear nation in the world, Russia who was looking longingly at Eastern Europe, again. There were billions of barrels of oil in the Middle East, but it would take years for the fallout to decay.

The Patriot III batteries (anti-missile) the Israelis bought from the US had prevented most of the warheads from impacting, mostly sparing the country. The Israelis also field the Hawk (anti-aircraft) missile and Barak missile (anti-aircraft) and Arrow missile (anti-missile). The first combat use of Hawk occurred in 1967 when Israel successfully fired the missiles during the Six Day War with Egypt. Even though it was not used by the coalition during Operation Desert Storm, the Hawk missile did see action during the Persian Gulf War. Kuwaiti air defense units equipped with US Hawk anti-aircraft missiles downed about 22 Iraqi aircraft and one combat helicopter during the invasion of 2 August 1990. In September 2002 Israel enhanced its air-defense system by deploying three additional Patriot Missile batteries: near Haifa in the north; near Gedera in central Israel; and near Eilat, at the southern tip. Reserve soldiers trained to operate the mobile missile batteries were called to duty on emergency orders.

It is interesting to note that the air defense envisioned during the Bush administration never got off the ground. THAAD was scheduled for deployment in 2011. The first intercept attempt of the THAAD system will take place in late 2004 or 2005. In July 2004 THAAD testing will move from White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico to the Pacific Missile Range for block 6 and 8 flight tests. Past failures hampered THAAD's test schedule.

Not that it mattered anymore, but, studies done by the military and independent sources cited the following problems in the Theater High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) Program: First, the program's compressed flight-test schedule did not allow for adequate ground testing, and officials could not spot problems before flight tests. The schedule also left too little time for preflight testing, post flight analysis, and corrective measures. Second, the requirement that an early prototype system be deployed quickly has diverted attention from the normal interceptor development process and resulted in interceptors that were not equipped with sufficient instruments to provide optimum test data. Third, quality assurance received too little emphasis and resources during component production, resulting in unreliable components. Fourth, the contract to develop the interceptor was a cost-plus-fixed-fee contract, which placed all of the financial risk on the government and did not hold the contractor accountable for less than optimum performance.

It hadn't helped any that the Republicans lost the White House and the Congress in 2008. The people's party would rather give money away to the people who were too lazy to hold a job than defend the rest of us. Economists will tell you that one has to choose between guns and butter. Guns & Butter investigates the relationships among capitalism, militarism and politics. Maintaining a radical perspective in the aftermath of the September 11th attacks, Guns & Butter reports on who wins and who loses when the economic resources of civil society are diverted toward global corporatization, war, and the furtherance of a national security state. Peaceniks!

What is the sense of having peace if you're afraid to leave your home? That was probably the sense of the discussion that Bush's cabal had had. The problem with a War on Terror is that you can't win. Ask the French and they'll tell you about Điện Biên Phủ. They will tell you about the Algerian War of Independence (1954-62). After initially controlling the Popular Front, the French lost. In this country, it more or less started with the first attack on the WTC in 1993 and then there was the totally successful hit on 9/11/01. Osama bin Laden may have funded the second attack, but even he was shocked at its success and at first denied that he was connected. First he said:

I have already said that I am not involved in the 11 September attacks in the United States. As a Muslim, I try my best to avoid telling a lie. I had no knowledge of these attacks, nor do I consider the killing of innocent women, children and other humans as an appreciable act. Islam strictly forbids causing harm to innocent women, children and other people. Such a practice is forbidden even in the course of a battle.... The United States should try to trace the perpetrators of these attacks within itself.... intelligence

agencies in the US, which require billions of dollars' worth of funds from the Congress and the government every year. This [funding issue] was not a big problem till the existence of the former Soviet Union but after that the budget of these agencies has been in danger. They needed an enemy. So, they first started propaganda against Usama and Taliban and then this incident happened. You see, the Bush Administration approved a budget of 40 billion dollars. Where will this huge amount go? It will be provided to the same agencies, which need huge funds and want to exert their importance. Now they will spend the money for their expansion and for increasing their importance. I will give you an example. Drug smugglers from all over the world are in contact with the US secret agencies. These agencies do not want to eradicate narcotics cultivation and trafficking because their importance will be diminished. The people in the US Drug Enforcement Department are encouraging drug trade so that they could show performance and get millions of dollars' worth of budget. General Noriega was made a drug baron by the CIA and, in need, he was made a scapegoat.

He changed his story and later claimed:

We calculated in advance the number of casualties from the enemy, who would be killed based on the position of the tower. We calculated that the floors that would be hit would be three or four floors. I was the most optimistic of them all. (...Inaudible...) Due to my experience in this field, I was thinking that the fire from the gas in the plane would melt the iron structure of the building and collapse the area where the plane hit and all the floors above it only. This is all that we had hoped for.

...as I looked at those demolished towers in Lebanon, it entered my mind that we should punish the oppressor in kind and that we should destroy towers in America in order that they taste some of what we tasted and so that they be deterred from killing our women and children.

On 9/23/05, Bin Laden was believed by Pakistani officials to be on the Afghan-Pakistani border. He is said to have been keeping a low profile, with as little as ten men guarding him. In October 2005, US authorities said they had no evidence of whether Bin Laden was hurt or died as a result of a M7.6 earthquake that hit the disputed area of Kashmir, in northeastern Pakistan. The reward is \$50 million. If the US government figures out on its own and kills him, they save the \$50 million.

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“It sounds to me like you’re advocating the 2nd American Revolution.”

“Not at all, Mel. All I am saying is that I’m not surprised. We have enough problems right here in Morgan Hill and in a way we’ve done our bit. They’ve dropped bridges north and south on US 101 so it’s reasonably difficult for people to get into Morgan Hill. About the only way into the community is through Santa Cruz to Watsonville to Gilroy and up Monterey Road.”

“And you think this isolation is a good thing?”

“You can bet your bippy on that. The Militia has all possible approaches to Morgan Hill covered. Unless the US Army comes in with an armored force or someone decides to use air power against us, we’re reasonably secure. I’m of the opinion that if we leave them alone, they’ll leave us alone. The government has too many irons in the fire if what you’re telling me from the ham bands is true.”

“Where did the country go wrong?”

“SALT, START and the ABM Treaties. There was nothing wrong with MAD, it kept everyone at arm’s length and gave us a reason to be. The biggest failure was the posture that the country took to convince the Soviet Union that we weren’t going to make a first strike by eliminating the Civil Defense Program. Didn’t keep the Chinese from attacking, did it? They had 1.4 billion people and their population is still the biggest in the world, war or not.”

“I suppose they eliminated population control, huh?”

“That was a very unpopular government program, probably. They undoubtedly don’t have much of a government left. The Taiwanese are probably the government now.”

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The National Missile Defense Program was originally a technology development effort. In 1996, at the direction of the Secretary of Defense, NMD was designated a Major Defense Acquisition Program and transitioned to an acquisition effort. Concurrently, BMDO was tasked with developing a deployable system within three years. This three-year development period culminated in 2000, and the Department of Defense began a Deployment Readiness Review in June 2000. Using that review, President Clinton was to make a deployment decision based on four criteria: the potential ICBM threat to the United States; the technical readiness of the NMD system; the projected cost of the NMD system; and potential environmental impact of the NMD system. Rather than make a decision, President Clinton deferred the deployment decision to his successor. The White House in choosing this action cited several factors. Among them were the lack of test under realistic conditions, the absence of testing of the booster rocket, and lingering questions over the system’s ability to deal with countermeasures.

Sitting of the ABM system was to have been at: Clear AS, Alaska, Eielson AFB, Alaska, Fort Greely, Alaska, Yukon Maneuver Area (Fort Wainwright), Alaska, Grand Forks AFB, North Dakota and Stanley R. Mickelsen Safeguard Complex, North Dakota – Missile Site Radar (MSR).

Near-term anti-missile improvements to existing air defense systems include the deployment of the Army’s Patriot PAC-2 Guidance Enhanced Missiles (GEM), which corrected some of the shortcomings identified during Desert Storm, and the Marine Corps’

Hawk Upgrades. These radar-guided systems retain their explosive warheads, which are detonated near their targets by proximity fuses.

The Patriot PAC-3 is an entirely new missile, derived from the ERINT interceptor, which is intended to counter theater-class ballistic missile threats using hit-to-kill intercept. The PAC-3 missile is fired from the same launcher as earlier versions of Patriot, although eight of the smaller PAC-3 missiles are carried in each firing unit, versus four each of the earlier versions. Six battalions are planned for deployment beginning in late 1999. The Navy Area Defense enhancement to the AEGIS/Standard Missile air defense system provides a tactical missile defense capability comparable to that provided by PAC-3. The modified Standard Missile 2 Block IV missiles will be deployed on Ticonderoga-class cruisers and Arleigh Burke-class destroyers equipped with the powerful AEGIS air and missile defense radar. A limited operational capability is planned for 1999 and an initial operational capability is planned for 2001.

Medium Extended Air Defense System (MEADS), formerly known as CorpSAM, is an international effort to develop a replacement for the widely deployed HAWK anti-aircraft system. This highly mobile system, to be deployed with forward deployed and maneuvering ground forces, is intended to provide omni-directional coverage against the full range of air-breathing threats [both aircraft and cruise missiles]. The United States, Germany, and Italy are partners in MEADS, following a decision in early 1995 by France to withdraw from the program.

These programs are relatively modest in cost, have limited technical risk, and are intended to counter existing threats from ballistic missile with ranges of hundreds of kilometers. Other more ambitious programs pose greater challenges in countering potential future emerging theater threats.

The Army's Theater High Altitude Area Defense [THAAD] is intended to provide extended coverage, engaging incoming missile at ranges of up to several hundred kilometers, versus the tens of kilometers provided by the previously discussed systems. This hit-to-kill interceptor could thus provide multiple engagement opportunities against missiles with ranges of hundreds of kilometers, and enhanced capabilities against future threats from missiles, which might have ranges of thousands of kilometers. THAAD missiles are intended to actually collide with the target ballistic missile, rather than destroying it by exploding nearby, as fragmentation warheads do. An infrared seeker on the kill vehicle provides final guidance to the target. The interception of a hostile ballistic missile is intended to occur outside the earth's atmosphere, or high in the atmosphere. The range of the THAAD system is to be approximately 200 km horizontally and 150 km vertically. In order to provide an emergency capability to counter a small number of missiles plans call for fielding about 40 THAAD missiles and associated radars by 1999. Each THAAD battery would include 9 launchers and 150 missiles.

A Home of Their Own – Chapter 24

Based on AEGIS-equipped ships, the Navy's Theater Wide long-range interceptor system will provide wide area coverage against a wide range of threats, including ascent phase intercepts where the ship's mobility permits such engagements.

Theater Missile Defense (TMD) program consists of three sequential efforts. First, the BMDO is making near term improvements to existing air and missile defense systems (Talon Shield/Joint Tactical Ground system, Hawk Air Defense System, Patriot Guidance Enhanced Missile) to enhance their abilities to defend against shorter-range tactical ballistic missiles. Second, is a set of three "core" TMD programs (Patriot Advanced Capability (PAC-3), Navy Area Defense, Theater High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD), and Battle Management / Command, Control & Intelligence). Third, is the development of advanced TMD capabilities (Navy Theater Wide Defense, Medium Extended Air Defense System and Boost Phase Intercept) that currently are in the concept exploration phase.

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"Why didn't you get any chickens, cattle and hogs?"

"The chickens should be obvious, there was that avian flu going around. Didn't get around to getting any cattle or hogs. Man, hogs stink!"

"Maybe, but a ham or a pork chop would taste pretty good about now."

"If you think you can get to the big valley and pick some up, go for it."

"Didn't your father raise livestock in Nebraska?"

"Got out of it, the only livestock we had were the horses. He always claimed that livestock took too much of his time and energy and that grain farming was the way to go."

"Right, and make yourself subject to the fickleness of nature."

"He didn't have many dry years, he did very well."

"Did he ever raise cattle?"

"Black Angus cattle and Yorkshire hogs."

"So, do you want to go along and help me find some?"

"Black Angus cattle are black and Yorkshire hogs are sort of tan colored. Most farmers in the Corn Belt raised Hampshire hogs. Those are black with a white belt around the middle. North American cattle seem to fall within 2 distinct groups, beef cattle and dairy

cattle. In this country only 11 breeds are identified as dairy breeds: Ayrshire, Brown Swiss, Canadienne, Dutch-belted, Guernsey, Holstein, Jersey, Kerry, Milking Devon, Milking Shorthorn and Norwegian Red.”

“I thought all cows produced milk.”

“They do, of course, but the breeds that produce the most are used in the dairy industry.”

“How much is that?”

“15-20 thousand pounds of milk. The current world record for Ayrshire is held by Lette Farms Betty’s Ida. In 305 days, on twice-a-day milking, she produced 37,170 pounds of milk and 1592 pounds of fat. The Ayrshire Breeders’ Association does not officially recognize records in excess of 305 days, but one Ayrshire has produced over 41,000 pounds of milk and 1800 pounds of butterfat in 365 days. I don’t suppose anyone is keeping track anymore.”

“They must make money.”

“Who?”

“Dairy farmers.”

“I remember reading that the government raised the minimum price to \$1.69 a gallon paid to farmers; the previous record was \$1.40 in February 1999. There are about 12 gallons in a hundredweight.”

“When was that?”

“Maybe 6 years ago.”

“So what we need is beef cattle, dairy cattle and hogs, right?”

“Poultry might be a good idea.”

“How can you tell if a chicken has the avian flu, take its temperature?”

“The farmers would have slaughtered their flocks and started over; any chickens you find now should be ok.”

“You’re betting our lives on that.”

“I’m going to appropriate the adjoining section of land, 5 acres aren’t going to be enough for much of a herd.”

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The trip south was to the Gilroy area and they brought back beef, swine and poultry, enough for everyone in Morgan Hill. Over the years, Gilroy became more than the World's Garlic Capitol. It became a major food processing area and Gilroy Foods, the subsidiary of McCormick and Company which produced dried garlic, onions and other vegetables was but one of many food processors in the area. In fact, a lot of the things a person could get at a place like Costco began their journey to the markets in Gilroy. They had the Chevron tanker to pull the trailers and trailers weren't hard to find, they were up and down 101.

"Sometimes I wish we hadn't blown the bridges."

"Tired of detouring around?"

"Now that you mention it, yes."

"If it's hard for us, it's equally difficult for anyone trying to get to Morgan Hill. Up to this point in time, we've been fortunate. The military pulled out but I doubt it was our harassment. Had it been, they would have turned over every stone in California looking for us. I believe that they had orders to leave and take those sheeple with them. It wouldn't surprise me to see them come back."

"They don't know the detours, how would they get through?"

"They have helicopters, Rudy. If that doesn't work, they could get Engineers to lay down those folding bridges, what did I hear them called, Wolverines? I also hear that they can cross a 24 meter gap in a road or cross a small river."

"If they bring in helicopters, it's all over. They have rockets that could do a job on us. The Marines used the AH-1W Super Cobras and the Army has AH-64D Longbows. The AH-64D Apache Longbow uses the M26119-tube rocket launchers and the AH-1 Cobra uses the 19 round LAU-61C/A and the seven round LAU-68 D/A rocket launchers. And they have those damned guns, which can take out armor."

"I guess we'd better not get caught doing anything wrong. It's time to put up the MBRs and ARs and dig out those Winchesters and Colts. We cut off the fuel valves and shut down the generators when they show up. They'll think we've regressed 100 years or more, especially when the vehicle won't start because we don't have fuel."

"The vehicles start just fine, how are you going to pull that off?"

"We'll insert a switch in the wiring controlling the starter circuit to disable the starter. We can use the small plug in circuits found on some vehicles wired to suit their needs."

"Couldn't we just crawl into the shelter?"

“And lose our newly acquired livestock? I’m not going to let that happen; if they want meat, they can buy it. Anyway, Mel says that the Army and Navy are on alert, something about problems in the Middle East.”

“What kind of problems? And, how could that affect the United States?”

“Iran and Syria attacked Israel. The Israelis responded by nuking both countries and tossed in the Saudis to boot.”

“That’s trouble, but I still don’t see how it affects us.”

“The Russians supplied Iran. Some of their people were reported killed.”

“Big deal, they lost 20 million in WW II.”

“Mel said the Israel’s asked the US to back their play. They want reloads for their missile systems and allegedly if the US gets involved, they feel that Russia will back down.”

“What can the US do?”

“We still have an intact Navy so we could send Carrier Strike Groups.”

“The Navy has been steaming around in circles? What for, they could help restore the country. They’d send Strike Groups; they probably don’t need the Marines.”

“Mel stays that they been guarding the country against a possible invasion because since the war, the country has been vulnerable. She didn’t say how they were doing it, but apparently the entire Navy is out of port and guarding our eastern and western coasts.”

“Something has to happen.”

“What do you mean?”

“Maria is pregnant again; our sense of timing is way off.”

“How far along?”

“About 3 months.”

“Congratulations. At least now we have a time frame; whatever is going down ought to happen in about 4-6 months.”

“How do you figure?”

“She had Rob in the shelter and she was about 7 months along when the attack came. There wouldn’t be any point to Russia nuking the country so if I were they I’d attack the Fleet.”

“The Fleet is well protected.”

“The Fleet is a moving bull’s-eye. The Russians could position spy satellites to watch the Fleet and project its course. Then they could launch a nuclear tipped missile and most surely disable it in a single blow. One missile being launched wouldn’t necessarily initiate an immediate response from our side and although it wouldn’t sink the entire complement of ships, it would stop a strike group.”

“Why?”

“They’ll be busy with rescue operations and the ships still afloat wouldn’t be able to project much power. The Navy of 2010 isn’t the same Navy we had during WW II. Those ships could project power because they had guns. Now they have a few missiles and one 5” gun. Even the Zumwalt, which hasn’t been commissioned, only has 2 155mm (6.1”) guns. When they realized how much larger the Zumwalt would be than an Arleigh Burke, the Congress forced it to be downsized. It’s still bigger than a Ticonderoga at 12,000 tons.”

“You don’t think Russia would attack this country do you?”

“They wouldn’t risk it, in my opinion. I don’t think that would stop them from destroying our Fleet if they had the opportunity, it would level the playing field. You spoke of the breaking of the 4 Seals, Rudy. The old Chinese curse is coming true, we’re living in interesting times.”

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“Maria is pregnant.”

“Rudy just told me, Mel, 3 months along. What are you hearing on the radios?”

“About what?”

“Possible Naval actions.”

“Nobody really knows Jon, the only ships putting in for replenishment are those supply ships they have. A ham in Norfolk said that they recently sailed. What are you concerned about?”

“What you told me earlier about Israel asking for our help.”

“That was an unconfirmed rumor.”

“Still. Rudy and I talked about the scroll with the seven seals in Revelations. He suggested, and I agreed, that perhaps the first 4 seals had been broken. We’ve had conquest, war, famine and death. *‘They were given power over a fourth of the earth to kill by sword, famine and plague, and by the wild beasts of the earth.’* Which quarter, Mel? Is it an area, region or simply a percentage? What is going to happen next?”

“If I recall, the Tribulation. The Devil takes control of the earth until the Lamb brings the believers to the Father.”

“We don’t do Revelations too much in the church I was raised in.”

“I’d probably need to look it up myself. Wasn’t the period of Tribulation 1,000 years?”

“Seems to me it was but what do I know? Anyway, I believe we’re going to have more trouble. We need to change our approach around the acreage and in Morgan Hill. If the government thinks we’re self-sustaining and have reverted to an earlier time in our history, they may leave us alone. Wear your Colt revolver.”

“We finally have milk and eggs and we have to cook over campfires?”

“Nothing so dramatic, we’ll shut down everything when the feds show up. I told Rudy they come about the time the baby was due.”

“Sheesh, I thought the Browning was heavy. How much does this revolver weigh?”

“About 38 ounces empty, so I guess about 40-42 ounces. I put cowboy loads in your revolver because they cut the recoil slightly.”

“What did you put in the Winchester?”

“200 grain jacketed hollow points.”

“What’s in the cartridge belt?”

“The hollow points, why? You won’t probably ever find yourself in a situation where you’ll be reloading your revolver.”

“Just wanted to know what I had. You should have gotten some of those old Ruger Vaqueros, they’re a nice looking revolver.”

“And heavier, they weigh 41 ounces without the cartridges.”

“How do you know?”

"I compared them at the store. The Stampede has 3 screws like the original Colt while the Ruger only has 2 and weighs about 4 ounces more."

"In that case, forget it. We should call this place Melody Ranch."

"I think the name is taken, that was the name of Gene Autry's ranch."

"Who?"

"The guy that sang Rudolph the Red-nosed Reindeer."

"He died didn't he?"

"In '98, he was 91-years old."

"At least he didn't stick around to see the world go to hell."

"He sold the Angels to Disney and used the money to build that Museum of his. They changed the name a while back. It's now the Autry National Center, an intercultural history center formed from the merger of three important museums: the Southwest Museum of the American Indian, the Museum of the American West (formerly the Autry Museum of Western Heritage), and the Women of the West Museum."

"If it's still standing, you mean."

"I suppose that I do. We should have gone when the going was good. But, what the hell, we're here playing Cowboys and Indians ourselves."

A Home of Their Own – Chapter 25

“Who was the worst bad woman in the old west?”

“Can’t really say, it could have been Belle Starr or Calamity Jane Canary. Starr died Feb. 3, 1889, age 40 and Canary died Aug. 1, 1903, age 51. Both of them were tough, but perhaps Starr was the worst.”

“I didn’t think Calamity Jane was bad.”

“She hung out with Hickok. She’s buried next to him in the Mt. Moriah Cemetery overlooking Deadwood.”

“So how did we end up on money after we bought the other land and built and furnished our home?”

“You got \$200,000 from your mothers estate and the \$200,000 uninsured motorist coverage. Plus Angie got whatever Joanne’s estate was. My dad owned 320 acres of land that was valued at over \$3,000 an acre. My share of the estate was \$½ million which was invested for 12 years at a very good interest rate. As a guide, you do know that money invested at 6% doubles itself every 7 years, don’t you? That check was for about \$1.6 million, the bank had a better interest rate on the investment.”

“Wow.”

“It gets better, Mel. Finished and furnished, the house came in at \$350,000. We got the land for another \$200,000 making our total investment in the land and the house \$650,000. By the time you figure the barn and the shelter, it’s a little over \$700,000. But, the realtor said that in the pre-war market, the property was worth about \$2 million. We had over a million in gold and silver at pre-war prices and it tripled in value. The bottom line is, we own 5 acres free and clear with a new home, barn and shelter. Plus we have enough precious metals to live comfortably for the rest of our lives. There is no way anyone will ever collect any income tax on our capital gains either, at least not during our lifetimes. I doubt they’ll ever get any taxes, no one will declare the gold and silver and the value of the property will be restated in terms of the current market when we’re gone. With the devaluation of the currency, there may not be a capital gain.”

“What you’re saying is that once you have money you get to keep it, right?”

“They did eliminate the estate taxes, so that helped. If we raise the livestock on the adjoining section, we can put in a 4-acre garden and feed a lot of people. Among the various fuel supply locations, we’ve located enough propane to keep our generators running for years. It could be worse, we could all be dead.”

Jon realized that while the US and China had taken nuclear strikes, most of the world hadn’t. Even when the Middle East exploded in a nuclear fireball, much of the world es-

caped unimpaired. Russia was the big kid on the block now, provided the US military stayed home and kept its collective nose out of other countries' business. A 100 years before, the US had followed a policy of isolationism. The word on the ham bands was that the US had returned to the policy of the previous century and was speaking softly and carrying a big (nuclear) stick.

If my reading of the situation in the world is wrong, you'd better started reading the Washington Times. Iran has declared war on Israel and China is building its military to grab Taiwan. A distant relative of the Lamb once preached in the wilderness saying, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord." The History Channel recently did a program on John.

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"You know, if you look at the latest figures on climate change and global warming ... they're terrifying, terrifying," Charles told CBS's "60 Minutes" in the interview aired Sunday.

The Prince is a keen environmentalist, but his office declined to say whether Charles would raise the issue of climate change when he dines with President Bush at the White House this week. Clarence House, the Prince's office, said it would not be appropriate to comment on a private dinner.

The distance from Bangor, Maine to Baghdad, Iraq is 5,623 miles (9,049 km) (4,886 nautical miles) on an initial heading from Bangor to Baghdad: northeast, 51.1°. The aircraft was a 757-300 with a typical cruise speed of 0.8 mach (speed of sound at that altitude=660mph), ~ 528 mph at a commercial jet's standard cruising altitude of 11,000 – 20,000 meters making the flight time roughly 11 hours ± takeoff and approach times. Baghdad is Zulu +3. This assumes that they fly a standard circular route, which they probably don't. According to Boeing, the maximum range of the aircraft is 3,395 nautical miles so I'm guessing they stopped once more to refuel.

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"Mel said that the US might go to the Middle East to back up Israel."

"She's hearing conflicting stories on the ham bands, Rudy. Some hams are saying that the US is adopting isolationism and some say that Israel has asked the US to back them if Russia decides to grab Middle Eastern oil."

"Why would they care about the oil?"

"Israel has 21 billion m³ of proven reserves of natural gas and almost 2 million barrels of proven reserves of oil. They consume on the order of 260-300 thousand barrels of oil a year. I don't believe they'd want Russia grabbing all of the oil."

"Israel couldn't stand up to Russia."

“Which is probably why they asked their principal sponsor, the US, to back them up. They can build a pipeline from Saudi Arabia and have all the oil they’ll ever need. Who cares if the Russians seize Iran and Iraq? It will be another Afghanistan if they do, just like it was our second Vietnam. What’s the latest on the bird flu, Rudy?”

“People aren’t dying off the way they did because of the attack seems to have eradicated it for the moment.”

“Did you have vaccine to vaccinate everyone?”

“Nope, but I have a good stock of Tamiflu.”

“How does that stuff work?”

“Tamiflu is a neuraminidase (noor-uh-MIN-ih-dase) inhibitor. These inhibitors treat the cause of influenza infection by inhibiting the critical neuraminidase protein on the surface of the virus. The key to treating the flu with Tamiflu is early administration, within 48 hours of onset.”

“What about other infections?”

“We’re vaccinated against most of those. The only problem would be mosquito and tick borne diseases for which there are no vaccines.”

“Like what?”

“Lyme disease, Rocky Mountain spotted fever, human granulocytic ehrlichiosis (HGE), malaria, yellow fever, dengue fever, and encephalitis are a few of the serious, or fatal, diseases transmitted by pests.”

“Anything we can do about them?”

“Use plenty of deet.”

“I thought we took Yellow Fever shots.”

“We did. But I can’t say that it will protect us against other diseases. We took the full series of boosters for the common childhood vaccinations plus Yellow Fever and Smallpox. While we were in the shelter, I evaluated the vaccination sites to make sure the vaccination for smallpox took. The original 8 people in the shelter are fully protected. Rob is getting his vaccinations on schedule and I had enough vaccine for Marty and Rosemary. It’s just a good thing I had an extra vial of smallpox vaccine, the Dryvax is only good for 90 days after it’s reconstituted. When I did that vial for Marty and Rosemary, I used the remainder on the other group. Are you still saddle sore?”

“Nah, the stiffness is mostly gone. You did a fair job shoeing the horses; they seem to be getting by ok.”

“Yeah, I spent a year learning to be a Paramedic and end up shoeing horses.”

“You’re our most valuable resource, Rudy. You’re our doctor and our farrier. Marty and I were visiting and he suggested that you stay out of any direct combat we might run into. I tend to agree, we need you to tend to the injured the best that you can and you can train us all to be Combat Lifesavers.”

“I’ll have to assemble some sort of kits so once you’re trained; you have the supplies to use. If I could get my hands on those new Combat Lifesaver kits they were manufacturing, we’d be in very good shape.”

“They made those in San Diego, do you want to risk going that far away?”

“How far is it?”

“About 440 miles on US 101 and I-5.”

“We’d better go the long way and pick up California 138, cut across to San Bernardino and take I-15. I know that it’s further, Jon, but I don’t want to get into LA.”

“I’ll go along with that, Rudy, but that makes the journey over 7 hours instead of the usual 6.”

“Assuming that we can get there and back without running into trouble. The bags were made by Homeland Security Technology Inc. (HST), a division of Amnis, Inc. a developmental stage company based in north county San Diego. HST’s mission is to develop and commercialize technology focused on providing increased security for both civilian and military personnel throughout the world. Under the leadership of Colonel Jeffrey A. Powers, USMC (Retired), HST has assembled a portfolio of technology and services through alliances with established defense-related companies and through internal development that can be brought to market in a cost-efficient and timely manner. The Company has entered into an alliance with Recon Mountaineer, LLC, (an Oceanside, California-based designer and manufacturer of military combat gear for the United States Armed Forces). I think we need to go to Del Mar.”

“We can use standard military checklists before we leave.”

PRE-COMBAT CHECKS / PRE-COMBAT INSPECTIONS

INDIVIDUAL CHECKLIST

___ Weapon * Weapon cleaned, function test and appropriate lubed?

___ Ammunition & Magazines * Magazines serviceable and ammunition loaded correctly

- ___ Kevlar *Chin strap serviceable
- ___ Flak Vest / Body Armor * Are plates properly installed and worn
- ___ Notebook and Writing Device
- ___ Issued Eye Protection Goggles *Clear lenses installed?
- ___ LBE w/ 2 canteens (topped off)
- ___ 2 First Aid Pouch w/dressing
- ___ Flashlight w/ extra batteries and bulb
- ___ ID Tags
- ___ Military ID card
- ___ Civilian / Military Drivers Licenses
- ___ Combat Lifesaver Kit and
- ___ IV Bags x Type (Expiration Dates?)
- ___ NVGs with batteries
- ___ OVM Keys
- ___ Checkbook / Cash (gold and silver coins)
- ___ Attended Convoy Brief
- ___ Attended Rehearsals

RUCK SACK / A-Bag (as needed for mission and what is the SOP for packing)

- ___ Sleeping Bag
- ___ 1 set DCU's/ BDU's
- ___ 2 T-shirts
- ___ 2 PR underwear
- ___ 2 PR socks (blk/grn)
- ___ 1 Towel
- ___ 1 Wash Cloth
- ___ 1 Sunscreen
- ___ Personal hygiene kit
- ___ JLIST Gear Complete
- ___ Wet weather gear
- ___ MREs-___ each
- ___ Work Coveralls
- ___ Work Gloves
- ___ Gore-Tex top/bottom (cold weather)
- ___ Polypro top/bottom (cold weather)
- ___ Cold Weather Gloves (cold weather)
- ___ Weapons Cleaning Kit w/ CLP or MILTECH

"We don't have some of those things."

"We'll improvise and delete the items that don't apply. I'll take 5% Dextrose in Lactated Ringer's Injection which provides electrolytes and calories, and is a source of water for hydration."

"What's to know about using that stuff?"

“The solution should be used with care in patients with hypervolemia, renal insufficiency, urinary tract obstruction, or impending or frank cardiac decompensation.

Extraordinary electrolyte losses such as may occur during protracted nasogastric suction, vomiting, diarrhea or gastrointestinal fistula drainage may necessitate additional electrolyte supplementation.

Additional essential electrolytes, minerals and vitamins should be supplied as needed.

Sodium-containing solutions should be administered with caution to patients receiving corticosteroids or corticotropin, or to other salt-retaining patients.

Care should be exercised in administering solutions containing sodium or potassium to patients with renal or cardiovascular insufficiency, with or without congestive heart failure, particularly if they are postoperative or elderly.

Solutions containing calcium should be used with caution in the presence of cardiac disease, particularly when accompanied by renal disease. Parenteral calcium should be administered with extreme caution to patients receiving digitalis preparations.

Solutions containing lactate should be used with caution. Excess administration may result in metabolic alkalosis.

The conversion of lactate to bicarbonate is markedly delayed in the presence of tissue anoxia and reduced capacity of the liver to metabolize lactate. This may occur under conditions such as metabolic acidosis associated with circulatory insufficiency, extracorporeal circulation, hypothermia, glycogen storage disease, liver dysfunction, respiratory alkalosis, shock or cardiac decompensation.

Solutions containing dextrose should be used with caution in patients with overt or known subclinical diabetes mellitus, or carbohydrate intolerance for any reason.

To minimize the risk of possible incompatibilities arising from mixing this solution with other additives that may be prescribed, the final infusate should be inspected for cloudiness or precipitation immediately after mixing, prior to administration, and periodically during administration.

Do not use plastic container in series connection.

If administration is controlled by a pumping device, care must be taken to discontinue pumping action before the container runs dry or air embolism may result.

This solution is intended for intravenous administration using sterile equipment. It is recommended that intravenous administration apparatus be replaced at least once every 24 hours.

Use only if solution is clear and container and seals are intact.”

“Says who?”

“The FDA. They had a website where they listed safety information. They had everything you wanted to know about problems with medical products, including devices, drugs, etc., if you could understand.”

“What does that all mean?”

“Don’t do an IV unless it’s necessary. For example, heat exhaustion can be treated with salty fluids, but heat stroke probably requires an IV like normal saline. If we can’t get CLS kits, let’s get XPouch. The XPouch contains what you need to respond with confidence in an emergency:

- 1-Patented TraumaDEX powder in a 2.0gm Bellows Applicator
- 1-The patented Asherman Chest Seal
- 1-Dukal 5”x9” Sterile SurgiPad
- 1-Dukal 4”x4” Sterile Gauze Pad
- 2-Microflex SafeGrip Latex Gloves
- 1-Trauma Shears for removing clothing quickly
- 1-Dukal 1/2”x10 Yards Cloth Tape Roll
- 2-Dukal 3” Conforming Gauze Roll
- 1-Twist-Lok to ensure the integrity of the complete kit
- 1-XPouch Case with 3M Scotchlite Reflective trim, dual steel zippers, three sided design for quick access and a clear front panel for easy viewing and identification. The back of the XPouch features a Velcro strip for easy attachment and placement into the vehicle glove box, trunk or under the seat.

The XPouch is a bag manufactured specifically for cops to use in the case of a shooting and traumatic blood loss. The limitations are that you can’t use TraumaDEX in certain situations, e.g., to date, there are no supportive data substantiating the safety and efficacy of TraumaDEX for use on sucking chest wounds, open brain injuries with exposed brain tissue and open fractures with exposed bone. Please note that the Asherman Chest Seal is used for sucking chest wounds (open chest wounds). TraumaDEX is not intended for intravenous application, and should never be injected into blood vessels. TraumaDEX should not be used if the foil package has been damaged or opened prior to use.”

A Home of Their Own – Chapter 26

Having gone through their military checklists, Jon, Rudy and Marty took off for San Diego, the back way. The first time they came under fire was in Palmdale when they passed by Avenue R. They didn't return fire because there were only 3 old guys, about 70 years old, looking over a fence. They continued on CA-138 and picked up I-15 just past Mormon Rocks. On the north side of San Diego, they picked up CA-56, the Ted Williams Parkway, and drove to Del Mar. The XPouch supplier was in Wisconsin so they couldn't get them. XPouch now contains QuikClot.

To be FAIR, the ACLU doesn't seem to give a crap whether or not our 2nd Amendment Rights get trampled on! They'll protect Roe V. Wade, they'll protect some homosexual child molester, but they don't like guns. No wonder Andrew Sheppard loved them so much! The ACLU has a website where one can read their positions on everything. If the Nazis have a right to march in Skokie, IL, I sure as hell have a right to keep and bear arms, the 2nd Amendment says so. They make the following claims:

The ACLU is our nation's guardian of liberty. We work daily in courts, legislatures and communities to defend and preserve the individual rights and liberties guaranteed to every person in this country by the Constitution and laws of the United States. Our job is to conserve America's original civic values - the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

The American system of government is founded on two counterbalancing principles: that the majority of the people govern, through democratically elected representatives; and that the power even of a democratic majority must be limited, to ensure individual rights.

Majority power is limited by the Constitution's Bill of Rights, which consists of the original ten amendments ratified in 1791, plus the three post-Civil War amendments (the Thirteenth, Fourteenth and Fifteenth) and the Nineteenth Amendment (women's suffrage), adopted in 1920.

The mission of the ACLU is to preserve all of these protections and guarantees:

- Your First Amendment rights-freedom of speech, association and assembly. Freedom of the press, and freedom of religion supported by the strict separation of church and state.
- Your right to equal protection under the law - equal treatment regardless of race, sex, religion or national origin.
- Your right to due process - fair treatment by the government whenever the loss of your liberty or property is at stake.
- Your right to privacy - freedom from unwarranted government intrusion into your personal and private affairs.

We work also to extend rights to segments of our population that have traditionally been denied their rights, including Native Americans and other people of color; lesbians, gay men, bisexuals and transgendered people; women; mental-health patients; prisoners; people with disabilities; and the poor. If the rights of society's most vulnerable members are denied, everybody's rights are imperiled.

Damn, I'm feeling awfully vulnerable out here in California where it's against the law to protect my family or me. The problem with ANY organization is that it isn't what they say they stand for; it's what they DO! How can you argue that you support the Bill of Rights if you omit some of those rights? I don't mind the Jehovah's Witnesses that come to the door; I just smile and say, "No thank you." The Mormons showed up one day and I took the guy up on the free Book of Mormon. They've never been back.

ACLU POLICY

"The ACLU agrees with the Supreme Court's long-standing interpretation of the Second Amendment [as set forth in the 1939 case, *US v. Miller*] that the individual's right to bear arms applies only to the preservation or efficiency of a well-regulated militia. Except for lawful police and military purposes, the possession of weapons by individuals is not constitutionally protected. Therefore, there is no constitutional impediment to the regulation of firearms." –Policy 47 You'd get mad reading their position. Ok?

Question, what if Miller had gone the other way? The stinking ACLU would be in Court every other day suing. Transgendered is some guy in a dress or some gal named Butch or Dyke. They have the right to stay out of my rifle range and I'll protect that right. After that, they're just targets. Hey, what can I say; the Methodist Church threw out a lesbian Minister. The Methodist Church seems to say out of sight, out of mind. We aren't as liberal as you'd think. To quote Gunny Highway, *You shouldn't litter, Fag-etti. It's ecologically unsound!* My neck is red and the thing that spoiled me was education.

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Ahmed Omar Abu Ali, 24, from Virginia, is on trial in US federal court, facing felony charges that could send him to prison for the rest of his life. Besides being accused of conspiring to assassinate the president, he also is charged with conspiracy to commit air piracy and offering aid to and receiving financial assistance from members of al Qaeda.

Abu Ali has confessed, but the defense says he was tortured in jail in Saudi Arabia where he was arrested in 2003 (by Saudis). Prosecutors say the confessions were voluntary. It doesn't matter; the confession is admissible because he didn't confess to Americans. The confessions obtained by Saudi security agents after his June 8, 2003, arrest will be admitted as evidence, though defense attorneys say he was tortured into making false statements. The US Constitution only applies to the US. My Constitutional Law professor in college was ultra-liberal. He paid me an offhand compliment one day

when he said, "Only 2 types of people really understand the Constitution, true liberals like me and Nazis like you." Only Jew I ever knew personally with red (orange) hair and I heard later that they put him in an asylum. I guess I shouldn't have worn the work boots hardhat to class. He thought I didn't like him because he was a Jew; I didn't like him because he was an asshole.

o

"All they have are the fanny packs, Jon."

"Take some of those and we'll see if we can find some supplies to fill them, Rudy. What do we need?"

"Lactated Ringer's, IV sets, TraumaDEX, bandages and something for sucking chest wounds, just like what's in the XPouch."

"There must be a dozen hospitals in San Diego, let's go shopping."

"If we can find one that's completely abandoned, we'll shop."

Instead, they got the Yellow Pages and found Medical Supplies. The 3 men only shopped the boarded up places and it took them most of the day to get everything they wanted. The national headquarters for IVAC used to be in San Diego. The problem is, the corporate offices didn't have any medical supplies. The same company that owns Homeland Security Technology Inc. owns IVAC (Alaris Medical Systems). (Alaris Medical Systems, Inc. was originally incorporated on September 28, 1988 under the name "Advanced Medical Technologies, Inc." The name "ALARIS Medical" was introduced in 1996 following the merger of two pioneers and leaders of infusion system technology, IMED Corporation and IVAC Medical Systems, Inc.) One of the reasons the prices of medical supplies is so high is that it's a closed system.

"I can't cram any more into the truck, Jon, we should have brought a trailer."

"What, they didn't have U-Haul in San Diego? How are we doing?"

"I have the drug supplies with expiration dates and got the freshest of each. We could stand to get more bandages."

"Fine we'll hook up to a trailer and load it before we head home."

"Speaking of which, you two, it's starting to get dark. Where are we going to spend the night?"

"How about we hook onto a trailer and pull inside at the next medical supply place?"

"Sounds ok to me. We can load the trailer and leave at first light."

“Fine, I’ll look and see if I can find any long-dated drugs.”

“What is a long-dated drug?”

“That means a long time until it expires. Let me give you an example, epinephrine. Epi has a shelf life from 12-24 months. It is sensitive to humidity, temperature changes, especially heat, and light. It breaks down because it oxidizes. They sometimes add sulfites as a preservative.”

◦

Side note: How can one audit someone if one doesn’t understand his or her business? That includes learning about all of the products they sell. Iowa exempts prescription drugs from sales tax so naturally an auditor from the state of Iowa has to learn about all sorts of medical stuff if he or she is going to properly audit a California medical supplier. One could ask the taxpayer; but taxpayers lie. One spends more time researching the company and their products than doing the audit much of the time. A defibrillator wasn’t tax exempt in Iowa, but the purchaser may have been. The Lions Club isn’t a tax-exempt purchaser but the American National Red Cross is.

◦

“So you want drugs that don’t expire for a very long time?”

“Right and we can store the sensitive drugs in the shelter where the temperature is an even 56° and there isn’t any light, especially inside the cabinets. I hope to find some ActCel hemostatic gauze, created from regenerated cellulose, which is an effective, patented hemostatic agent. Upon contact with blood, ActCel gauze instantly converts to a glucose gel, which expands to cause direct pressure on blood vessels and controls bleeding.” (2x2” \$6, 4x4” \$12)

“Had I been wise, I’d have loaded up on supplies from EMP Medical Supplies. They have all sorts of kits and we shouldn’t be all the way down in San Diego looking for things now.”

“Spilt milk, Jon, I have enough to put together a kit similar to a Combat Lifesaver kit. It won’t have diazepam but I doubt we’ll have a nerve gas attack. In some ways my kit is better, it includes most of the recent additions include blood clotting materials and bandages. It also includes a Kendall flex-wrap self-adherent wrap too. Since we’re going to use the fanny packs, I’ll include normal saline and Ringer’s. I doubt we’ll face heat exhaustion, but better safe than sorry.”

“Tylenol for pain?”

“No, I found some morphine ampules (schedule II) with 1mg of ms per ml and 10ml capacity. You should know the rules about using morphine, but I’ll cover that in the CLS refresher class. I’m going to cover usage of every item in your bags until you have it down cold.”

A Home of Their Own – Chapter 27

“The Liberals are Biden, Boxer, Clinton, Corzine, Dayton, Durbin, Feinstein, Harkin, Lautenberg, Leahy, Levin, Kennedy, Kerry, Murray, Reed, Reid, Sarbanes, Schumer and Stabenow. The moderates are Lieberman, Byrd, Nelson, Landrieu, Inouye, Pryor and Salazar. The Republican members of the Gang of 14 are McCain, Graham, Warner, Snowe, Collins, DeWine and Chafee. Conservative Republicans? Name one who isn’t? Where do you draw the line? In logic, begging the question is the term for a type of fallacy occurring in deductive reasoning in which the proposition to be proved is assumed implicitly or explicitly in one of the premises. For an example of this, consider the following argument: “Politicians cannot be trusted. Only an untrustworthy person would run for office; the fact that politicians are untrustworthy is proof of this. Therefore politicians cannot be trusted” Such an argument is fallacious; it relies upon its own proposition (in this case, “politicians are untrustworthy”) in order to support its central premise. Essentially, the argument assumes that its central point is already proven, and uses this in support of itself.

There was only one catch and that was Catch-22, which specified that a concern for one’s safety in the face of dangers that were real and immediate was the process of a rational mind. Orr was crazy and could be grounded. All he had to do was ask; and as soon as he did, he would no longer be crazy and would have to fly more missions. Orr would be crazy to fly more missions and sane if he didn’t, but if he was sane he had to fly them. If he flew them he was crazy and didn’t have to; but if he didn’t want to he was sane and had to. Yossarian was moved very deeply by the absolute simplicity of this clause of Catch-22 and let out a respectful whistle.

A fallacy is often used rhetorically so that the question limits direct replies to something that serves the questioner’s agenda. The standard example of this is the question, have you stopped beating your wife? Whether the person asked answers yes or no, he will admit to having beaten his wife at some time in the past. Thus, that fact is presupposed by the question, and if it has not been agreed upon by the speakers before, the question is improper, and the fallacy of many questions has been committed.

Intelligent Design (abbreviated ID) is the controversial assertion that certain features of the universe and of living things exhibit the characteristics of a product resulting from an intelligent cause or agent, not an unguided process such as natural selection. Though publicly Intelligent Design advocates state that their focus is on detecting evidence of design in nature without regard to who or what the designer might be, in statements to their constituents and supporters, nearly all state explicitly that they believe the designer to be the Christian God.

Adherents of Intelligent Design claim it stands on equal footing with, or superior to, the current scientific theories regarding the origin of life and the origin of the universe. This claim has not been accepted by the scientific community and Intelligent Design does not constitute serious research in biology. Despite Intelligent Design sometimes being referred to popularly and in the media as “Intelligent Design Theory,” it is not a scientific

theory by any commonly used definition of that term. The scientific community holds it to be creationist pseudoscience or junk science. The National Academy of Sciences has said that Intelligent Design “and other claims of supernatural intervention in the origin of life” are not science because their claims cannot be tested by experiment and propose no new hypotheses of their own. Critics argue that Intelligent Design proponents try to find gaps within current evolutionary theory and fill them in with speculative beliefs, and that Intelligent Design in this context may ultimately amount to the “God of the gaps.”

Both the Intelligent Design concept and the associated movement have come under considerable criticism. This criticism is regarded by advocates of Intelligent Design as a natural consequence of philosophical naturalism, which precludes by definition the possibility of supernatural causes as rational scientific explanations. As has been argued before in the context of the creation-evolution controversy, proponents of Intelligent Design make the claim that there is a systemic bias within the scientific community against proponents’ ideas and research based on the naturalistic assumption that science can only make reference to natural causes. Critics view this argument as polemical (slightly formal).

Examining the etymology of the word, the word polemic is derived from the Greek “war” and was originally used in theological contexts. To indulge in polemic is to wage war against an idea and those holding the idea. Originally, it was theological (religious) ideas that were so attacked, but in the present, polemic is an attack on any sort of idea. So while in on narrower sense the word also means “argument”, perhaps even in the sense of “to formulate a case against” it clearly has stronger connotations, as a glance at the list synonyms (also listed below) makes clear. A polemical argument is not one that is necessarily couched on reason, nor is reason the only tool at the disposal of the polemicist. And a polemical argument is certainly not one that will consider all sides of an issue in an attempt to find truth. That is, a polemical argument is by definition not objective. Being objective (or fair) is not the objective of polemical writing.

History is an examination of the past, done from the present. History goes beyond merely cataloging details of events, and involves an attempt to put these events into a meaningful context, and answer questions involving “Why?” If (big if) you subscribe to a philosophical realist or idealist position, then there will be some answers that are more correct, and others less correct. The relativist historian, on the other hand, sees the past a collection of raw material to be assembled into whatever order pleases him or her and/or suits his or her conscious or unconscious agenda. No explanation is any more right or wrong than any other, they are merely more or less effective. All is merely a matter of how you choose to look at things. If, on the other hand, some versions of history are correct, and others incorrect, then this implies that those who care about truth are seeking a more correct version. Pursuing the goal of truth for its own sake, the more objective and fair you can be, the closer you are likely to come. (Daniel Hinds March 13th, 2004)

Let me state for the record that Methodists, like me, are Christians. Liberal, maybe, but Christians. I don’t know anything about the ID movement, but I do know what I believe.

So, if I slip and say God was an astronaut, just ignore me, I'm having a senior moment. With the youngest son in Iraq, it's pretty hard to pray to an astronaut. They're probably back home on Mars. I got an email from Derek, he made it to Baghdad and says it's as bad as he feared.

◦

Every member of the Supreme Court is in charge of a Federal Circuit as follows:

For the First Circuit, David H. Souter, Associate Justice,
For the Second Circuit, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Associate Justice,
For the Third Circuit, David H. Souter, Associate Justice,
For the Fourth Circuit, John G. Roberts, Jr., Chief Justice,
For the Fifth Circuit, Antonin Scalia, Associate Justice,
For the Sixth Circuit, John Paul Stevens, Associate Justice,
For the Seventh Circuit, John Paul Stevens, Associate Justice,
For the Eighth Circuit, Clarence Thomas, Associate Justice,
For the Ninth Circuit, Sandra Day O'Connor, Associate Justice,
For the Tenth Circuit, Stephen Breyer, Associate Justice,
For the Eleventh Circuit, Anthony M. Kennedy, Associate Justice,
For the Federal Circuit, John G. Roberts, Jr., Chief Justice.

If Alito gets confirmed he'll be in charge of the 9th Circuit.

◦

I'm proud of all of the 130,000 men and women representing our country in Iraq. It matters not whether I agree with our being there because that's not up to me. Most of this family takes the position that once the decision is made, everyone should support the Commander-in-Chief and our men and women in uniform. If not there, then where? The sides seem to be lining up and it's the Jews and Christians against the Muslims, what a crying shame. All 3 groups are the children of Abraham. Now France is having their problems with the Muslims. I wonder if they'll still tolerate the Muslims once their trains get bombed? The current hostility in France makes you almost think they're Israelis.

Jon, Rudy and Marty made it home without problem. They turned west on Avenue S in Palmdale to avoid those old crackpots in the housing tract near 47th and R. After they got back to the acreage, Rudy assembled the medical bags and then spent several days covering CPR, establishing IVs, when an IV was warranted and when it wasn't. He took his time; this was a matter of life and death. Additional kits were prepared for the folks in group 1 and the class offered on-site. A major emphasis was made on providing only as much assistance as the situation seemed to require. One item included in their bags that wasn't included in the military counterpart was gel and bandages for burns, both WaterJel products. The rule of thumb was, don't use a fancy bandage when a Band-Aid will do.

Aspirin? While the most frequently recommended dose is 81mg, for higher-risk patients who have suffered a heart attack or stroke, physicians often recommend 325mg aspirin daily for cardiovascular protection. In addition, some cardiovascular procedure indications suggest doses up to 650-1300mg per day. Therefore, no one dose is appropriate for every individual or for every indication.

◦

Sustained person-to-person spread of the bird flu or any other super-influenza strain anywhere in the world could prompt the United States to implement travel restrictions or other steps to block a brewing pandemic, say federal plans released Wednesday.

If a super-flu begins spreading here, states and cities will have to ration scarce medications and triage panicked patients to prevent them from overwhelming hospitals and spreading infection inside emergency rooms, the plan says.

Before the war, someone hopped on a jet and brought it to the US because she didn't have any symptoms... and now they're saying, "Papers, please."

◦

The Facts of Life – Most people aren't prepared for the next disaster. They lack: food, shelter, a means of defense, medicines, training where required and the right attitude. If they have frozen food stored, they probably don't have a standby generator. The next disaster isn't a matter of if, only when. Logic dictates that when TSHTF, the clear thinking people will immediately assess the situation and determine if they can wait for help or if they need to "help themselves" to what they don't have so they will have it.

We checked Medicare Part D coverage and my Rx's either cost \$30 or \$60 each for a 30 day supply and Xanax isn't covered. It's almost more than some of them cost, but there is an overall savings. I figure that once the Part D kicks in, physician's samples might be more readily available so that's where I look to stockpile my 120-day supply.

In 1996, Judge Samuel Alito cast the lone dissenting vote among his fellow Third Circuit Court of Appeals judges when they upheld the authority of Congress to ban fully automatic machine guns.

Needless to say, that vote has brought the wrath of pro-gun control groups, like the Brady Campaign, down on President Bush's nomination of Judge Alito to replace Sandra Day O'Connor on the Supreme Court.

"How could it have gone in any other direction, from a White House that just gave blanket immunity to the gun industry, which refuses to bar terrorists from buying guns, that broke a campaign promise and put Uzis and AK-47s back on America's city streets, and insisted that records of gun purchases be destroyed before the sun sets on them twice,"

asks the Brady Campaign in a press release. “It had to be a Supreme Court pick that favors legal machine guns.”

“Earth to Sammy – who needs legal machine guns?” asked Jim Brady, chair of the Brady Campaign. “The Chicago mobsters of the 1930s would be giddy. But the man I worked for (President Reagan), who gave us Sandra Day O’Connor and signed the 1986 machine gun ban, would be shaking his head.”

Guide Extra:

The Gun Control Act of 1968 prohibits certain people from possessing a firearm. The possession of any firearm by one of these “prohibited persons” is a felony offense. It is also a felony for any person, including a registered Federal Firearms Licensee to sell or otherwise transfer any firearm to a person knowing or having “reasonable cause” to believe that the person receiving the firearm is prohibited from firearm possession. There are nine categories of persons prohibited from possessing firearms under the Gun Control Act:

- Persons under indictment for, or convicted of, any crime punishable by imprisonment for a term exceeding one year;
- Fugitives from justice;
- Persons who are unlawful users of, or addicted to, any controlled substance;
- Persons who have been declared by a court as mental defectives or have been committed to a mental institution;
- Illegal aliens, or aliens who were admitted to the United States under a nonimmigrant visa;
- Persons who have been dishonorably discharged from the Armed Forces;
- Persons who have renounced their United States citizenship;
- Persons subject to certain types of restraining orders; and
- Persons who have been convicted of a misdemeanor crime of domestic violence.

Raider Nation will pick up the slack and cover my six. I’m going to take a while off.

A Home of Their Own – Epilogue

The ABCs of trauma medicine are: Airway, Breathing and Circulation. I have three trauma treatment guidelines. Every agency in the country has protocols they follow.

◦

The XPouch mentioned in the earlier chapters of the story lists TraumaDEX. However, the EMP catalog lists the following XPouch contents on page 440.

- 1-ActCel 4x4 hemostatic gauze (now replaced with QuikClot)
- 1-The patented Asherman Chest Seal
- 1-Dukal 5"x9" Sterile SurgiPad
- 1-Dukal 4"x4" Sterile Gauze Pad
- 2-Microflex SafeGrip Latex Gloves
- 1-Trauma Shears for removing clothing quickly
- 1-Dukal ½"x10 Yards Cloth Tape Roll
- 2-Dukal 3" Conforming Gauze Roll
- 1-Twist-Lok to ensure the integrity of the complete kit
- 1-XPouch Case

LA and San Diego County the Paramedics only carry 21 drugs these days: Adenosine, Albuterol, Aspirin, Atropine Sulfate, Benadryl, Calcium Chloride, Activated Charcoal, Dextrose, Dopamine, Epinephrine (1:10,000), Lasix, Lidocaine, Morphine Sulfate, Narcan, Nitroglycerin, Normal Saline, Oxygen, Pitocin, Sodium Bicarbonate, Versed and Verapamil.

I know because I have a catalog, which came recently while I was in the middle of hypoglycemic event.

Hypoglycemia is the term used to describe a low blood glucose level (BG). This would be a blood glucose level of less than 65 mg/dl. A severe hypoglycemic event is described as any event in which the patient required assistance from another person or any event in which the patient suffered a seizure or coma. Repeated episodes of hypoglycemia appear to affect a person's ability to recognize the warning signs of approaching attacks in the future. Some researchers have even claimed to have found evidence that hypoglycemia may affect cognitive function. From the inside looking out, a hypoglycemic event is strange. People talk to you and you can understand them but can't formulate a response.

Now I know why a Paramedic goes to school for a year. Most of those medications have indications, contraindications and precautions. All of them except aspirin require a prescription, even oxygen. Assuming you could get your hands on all of the drugs in a standard Paramedics drug box, why would you want to? You never want access to drugs unless you know exactly how to use them and when and when not. Some are Schedule II drugs and almost impossible to get.

Here is what Web Med says about the drugs:

Adenosine treats Paroxysmal Supraventricular Tachycardia, Supraventricular Tachycardia, and rapid heart action. Albuterol relaxes the smooth muscle in the lungs and dilates airways to improve breathing and is used in the treatment of asthma, chronic bronchitis, and emphysema. Aspirin is an analgesic that also thins the blood. Atropine Sulfate is used for Reversal of Nerve Function Blockage that Affects Muscle, Sinus Bradycardia, Increased Production of Saliva, Additional X-Rays of the Stomach or Intestines, Additional Agent to Induce General Anesthesia, Poisoning caused by Anticholinesterase Medication, Toxic Amount of Muscarine in the Body, Overdose of Organophosphorous Agent.

Benadryl is used to treat Parkinson's Disease, Extrapyrimal Reaction, Allergic Conjunctivitis, Inflammation of the Nose due to an Allergy, Stuffy Nose, Itching, Welt from Pressure on Skin, Urticaria and Angioedema (Hives), Sensation of Spinning or Whirling, Abnormal Trouble Sleeping, Sneezing, Cough, Nausea and Vomiting, Feel Like Throwing Up, Throwing Up, Life Threatening Allergic Reaction. Calcium Chloride is used to treat High Amount of Magnesium in the Blood, Low Amount of Calcium in the Blood, Prevention of a Low Amount of Calcium in the Blood, High Amount of Potassium in the Blood, Imbalance in Body Salts like Potassium and Sodium, Complete Stoppage of the Heart, Spasm of Muscles caused by Lack of Calcium.

Activated Charcoal is used to treat Gas, Diarrhea, and Poisoning from Swallowed Unknown Substance. Dextrose solutions in water rapidly raise blood sugar levels. Dopamine is used to treat Decrease in the Amount of Work the Heart Does, Sudden Drop in Blood Pressure and Sinus Bradycardia, Chronic Heart Failure, Acute Kidney Disease. Epinephrine is used to treat Carotid Sinus Syncope, Dilated Pupils During Eye Surgery, Heart Block, Adams-Stokes Syndrome, Complete Stoppage of the Heart, Decrease in the Amount of Work the Heart Does, Sudden Drop in Blood Pressure, Bleeding During Eye Surgery, Superficial Bleeding, Severe Prolonged Asthma Attack, Spasms of the Lung, Additional Medication to Treat Hives, Additional Agent to Induce General Anesthesia, Additional Local Anesthesia, Life Threatening Allergic Reaction, Reaction due to an Allergy plus Sinus Bradycardia, Recurrent Continued Painful Erection.

Lasix is used to treat Extremely High Blood Pressure, Extremely High Blood Pressure with Kidney Disease, Extremely High Blood Pressure with Lung Disease, Accumulation of Fluid Resulting from Chronic Heart Failure, Fluid in the Lungs due to Chronic Heart Failure, Rapid Onset of Fluid in the Lungs, Visible Water Retention and High Amount of Calcium in the Blood, Prevent Kidney Problems Causing a Decreased Amount of Urine to be Passed.

Lidocaine is used to treat Heart Ventricle Rhythm Problems to numb an area before surgery or before another medical procedure. Morphine Sulfate is used to Agent to Induce General Anesthesia, Additional Local Anesthesia, Pain and Fluid in the Lungs, Calming of Intubated Patient by Administration of Sedative. Narcan is used to treat Tox-

ic Amount of Narcotics in the Body, Decrease in Rate & Depth of Breathing due to Opioid Drug. You might call it the Lazarus Drug. Nitroglycerin, a vasodilator, is used to treat Angina, Angina Pectoris Prevention and Heart Attack, Chronic Heart Failure.

Normal Saline is used for saline solution is used as a mixing solution (diluent) for powder medications. It is also used to flush injection lines (IV lines), feeding tubes, or used to keep injection lines open (saline lock) and to bulk up blood. Oxygen doesn't need any explanation. Pitocin is used to treat Incomplete Abortion, Abortion, Hemorrhage Following Delivery of Baby, Use of Drugs or Surgical Procedures to Begin Labor Process and Study of the Placenta. Sodium Bicarbonate Excess Body Acid, Severe Diarrhea, Increase pH of Urine, Overdose and is frequently used to treat acidosis after a heart attack.

Versed is used to treat Induce Temporary Amnesia, Anxious, Additional Agent to Induce General Anesthesia, The Act of Calming, Sedation with Ability to Respond to Stimulation or Speech, Calming of Intubated Patient by Administration of Sedative and can also be used for Sleep Disturbance with Extreme Anxiety, Feeling Restless, Repeated Seizures with Unconsciousness Between Episodes, Additional Local Anesthesia, Abnormal Trouble Sleeping. Verapamil treats Paroxysmal Supraventricular Tachycardia and lowers blood pressure.

I looked the drugs up and some are schedule II drugs. You don't want any schedule II drugs.

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